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The White Idol's Trail

-:- Or, -:-

The Holy Ngah

By Hapsburg Liebe

CHAPTER I.

PEPE MALANA, THE VISAYAN.

WHETHER the island of their strange adventure belonged to the Philippines or to Micronesia, neither Redding nor Silverthorn ever knew. It might well have belonged to the Sulu Archipelago, however, considering the treachery and savagery of its inhabitants. These latter were a dark brown, coarse-haired people of low mentality, who went about with razor-like krises and barongs hanging in leather scabbards against their naked limbs, the scabbards being suspended from grass cords, which formed the prevailing style so far as wearing apparel was concerned. Also, these Karimundans were netted over with ornamental scars and tattooed; and their teeth were filed concave and stained yellow from the habitual use of the betel. A few of them understood a smattering of Spanish; but for the most part they were utterly primitive.

Ben Redding and Ryder Silverthorn had sailed from Manila on the pearling schooner Estrella, having embarked the day following their discharge from the American Army, with the avowed intention of seeing something of the South Sea Islands before returning to the States. When they were somewhere south of Mindanao, however, an altercation had unfortunately arisen between them and the Tagal skipper, with the result that they had been mercilessly put ashore on Karimunda—and the one and only kindness they enjoyed at the hands of the brutish commander of the pearling vessel was the bare privilege of wearing their revolvers and cartridge belts.

A hundred yards from their landing-place, back in a fine grove of cocoanut palms, they had found an empty hut of nipa and bamboo, which they had decided should serve as quarters during their indefinite stay on the island. Their pocket knives and other trinkets—among these people money had no value beyond being merely pretty—soon went for grass mats and a cocoanut-oil lamp, and for a certain not unsavory pudding made of rice and sugar cane.

They were now facing a rather serious problem; for it was evident that their dusky neighbors were growing weary of them, since they no longer had anything for trading. The one vessel that

had passed had either failed to see, or else had entirely disregarded, their signals of distress.

"I thought," said Redding to his companion, as he threw the seed of an overripe mango out into the grove, "I thought I'd never tire of tropical fruits, when I was a boy. But, Kid, I'm tired of them now. Honest, I'm starving, Kid."

He persisted in calling Silverthorn "Kid." Still, he was a very big fellow, and Silverthorn was a very little fellow, and perhaps that gave him a sort of right.

Silverthorn made no reply.

"We'd better take to doing watching at night instead of sleeping, Kid," Redding went on. "There's trouble coming, believe me. I've got no hankering to have a kris pass between my head and my shoulders while dreaming peacefully of home."

"Guard duty, eh?" smiled the little American.

"You're on," replied Redding. "We——"

He broke off abruptly and straightened; then he sprang to his feet, peering under one of his muscular brown hands toward the dense wall of vegetation which lay between the belt of palms along the shore and the central part of the island.

Silverthorn also rose. They saw the foliage of a group of banana plants shake, after which an almost naked figure, carrying some bulky object wrapped in a richly embroidered native cloth, came hurriedly toward them. When closer, they saw that their visitor was bleeding from a deep, clean-cut wound extending from his right eye to the corner of his mouth.

The two adventurers hastened to meet him. He swayed as he approached, and Redding caught him by the bare shoulders, at the same time noting that his skin was of a lighter shade of brown than that of the Karinundans, and that his features were far more intellectual than those of the original inhabitants of the island.

Redding's observations were confirmed by the first words spoken by the wounded man.

"I am Pepe Malana, the Visayan, senors," he gasped in pure Spanish, breathing with difficulty because of his great fatigue. "Keep this until I call for it. And, senors, be careful that the Karinundans do not see it!"

He had pushed the bulky object into the big American's hands while speaking. Then, with a frightened glance behind him, he staggered to his right and into the thick tangle, which seemed to swallow him up hungrily. And within half a minute after his going there was no visible thing to remind the Americans that they had had a visitor—except the object the wounded man had left in Redding's hands.

For they did not see the score of angry savage eyes that were watching them from the jungle, the eyes of the pursuers of Pepe Malana, the Visayan.

With a queer little smile Redding turned to his friend, exposing from beneath the embroidered cloth a grinning idol that had been elegantly carved from some sto[illegible]s white as ivory. It was about fo[illegible] and [illegible] mouth was four and its eye[illegible]ond-shaped, it was almost a pe[illegible] counterpart of the American image called Billiken, sitting as it did with its thick legs outstretched, its hands lying close to its thighs.

Redding then called attention to a small round spot of bright scarlet on the figure's head, which appeared to have been painted there.

"Well, what have you got to say about that?" he asked.

Little Silverthorn backed away.

"Don't want anything to do with it, Ben," he said, with a quick gesture of disapproval. "We're going to get into a serious mixup if you keep that thing, you see if we don't. You'll admit that we're in no high favor, as it is. Did it ever strike you that the Visayan was being pursued? He was, of course, which was his reason for handing us that bunch of bad luck; and if we know what's good for us, we'll give the blamed thing you've got there a wide berth."

"The Visayan had been reared by Spaniards, all right," mused the bigger of the two Americans. "I could tell that by his talk."

Redding turned toward the hut, walking slowly and thoughtfully along under the spreading palms. Silverthorn followed half-sulkily.

After further examination and comment, the idol was hidden under a pile of nipa in one corner of the little habitation, and Redding sat down beside it. Then he reached for the bamboo joint which served as a vessel for holding the water they drank; it was dry.

Little Silverthorn noted it, and advanced for the empty receptacle, claiming that it was his turn to go to the spring. Redding, like the good fellow he was, disputed it; but Silverthorn carried his point and set out.

Redding sat back down, threw his revolver and belt aside, leaned against the wall of the hut, and composed himself for an afternoon nap. In this, as events proved, he was somewhat incautious; for Silverthorn would be gone half an hour, owing to the fact that the spring lay more than half a mile around the coast.

The little American strolled slowly toward his destination, swinging the bamboo vessel idly by its thong of hide, and absently watching the sunlight dance on the uneven blue of the sea as he turned over in his mind the matter of the idol's coming.

Having filled the joint with water, he strolled as slowly back to the hut, his thoughts harder than ever at the task of unraveling the mystery which was presented to him by the figure of white stone.

When he reached the primitive habitation he found it deserted. Redding's hat lay crumpled on a mat. Silverthorn set the bamboo joint down so quickly that it overturned and spilled its contents; then, with a cry of apprehension, he darted to the pile of nipa that had hidden the idol.

The idol was gone! But, in uncovering it, the nipa had been thrown over Redding's revolver and cartridge belt, thereby saving them, too, from being taken. Silverthorn examined the floor minutely, and found nothing; still, the ground was so dry and hard that it would not have revealed a footprint had there been an elephant there.

"It was that bad luck Billiken!" Silverthorn said vehemently to the silence. "I told Ben Redding——"

A pair of ironlike, hairy hands closed in on his throat, and he felt himself being hurled backward with great force. Just before his head came into contact with a stone which lay on the ground at the door, however, he caught a fleeting glimpse of his antagonist.

The latter was a stalwart creature, not a Karinundan, but a white man. His only clothing was a tattered and sleeveless blouse and a clout of woven grass; his muscular limbs, his head, and the greater portion of his face were covered with hair as black as ebony; his eyes, too, were black, and as sharp as a pair of spears.

The strange man began to ransack the hut like one possessed. He became enraged when he failed to find the object of his search, for he had choked the Visayan into telling where he had left the idol; and naturally the Visayan had no fears that the image could be easily taken from the Americans.

The uncouth white man picked up Redding's revolver and belt of cartridges with a cry of triumph, afterward taking little Silverthorn's weapon and ammunition also. Then he plunged into the tropical maze that lay toward the center of the island.

CHAPTER II.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE HOLY NGAH.

BEN REDDING, being very drowsy because of a series of almost sleepless nights—the latter due to mosquitoes and ants—had hardly touched the wall of nipa with his head before he was soundly slumbering. He began to dream. He dreamed that he was being roped hand and foot on the deck of the Estrella by order of the Tagal skipper; the ropes began to pinch painfully, and just as the native sailors were in the act of throwing him over the rail to th[illegible]pitiless black waters, he awoke.

He [illegible] himself with the situ[illegible] immediately—the years as a soldier in the Orient had taught him to do that. He saw above him many dark faces lined with ornamental scars—scars which failed of their purpose in that they made the countenances hideous. He noted that more than a score of eyes were blazing down upon him with a fanatical and insensate wrath. And at the same time he realized that his dream of being helplessly bound had not been without its foundation. For he was roped hand and foot as tightly as he had dreamed!

Among the other Karinundans, a head taller than any of them, stood a figure wearing a robe of some dark stuff, perhaps pina cloth, which was embroidered richly but with a lack of the artistic in bright-red shapes, in the latter being the forms of fishes, of birds, of serpents. His arms were folded over his chest, and he had about him an air of great authority. Redding at once decided that he was a chief of some sort, who had commanded that his underlings make the capture they had just made.

Now, Redding's mind ran on hopefully, if only little Kid Silverthorn would appear on the scene with his revolver! For a revolver was worth more than many krises and barongs.

Seeing that the American was beyond harming them—which indicated that the Karinundans feared the white men in a measure—the one in authority gave an order in the worst class of savage jargon Redding had ever heard; and Redding, altho he had memorized a little of the principal dialects of the Philippines, recognized not one iota of this outlandish tongue of Karinunda.

The underlings, after making signs of obeisance to their leader, crowded about Redding and lifted him up in their arms. Then, with the tall man in the dark robe carrying the white idol reverently and walking a few feet in advance, they proceeded to the jungle and started thru it by the same path by which the wounded Visayan had approached the hut shortly before.

A strange procession, truly, and one that was altogether silent until the captive decided to try the effect of a few Spanish words upon them.

"Where are you taking me?"

Most of the Karinundans paid no attention whatever to the question, not understanding the tongue; but the one in authority turned and began to walk beside the American.

"To the Temple of the Holy Ngah," he answered gravely; and his eyes, sunken and small and wicked, flashed a great hatred.

"And why to the Temple of Ngah?" Redding pursued, quietly, however, for fear of arousing anger by his inquisitiveness.

"That you may make amends for your sin," the much-tattooed chief answered readily, not at all averse to breaking unwelcome tidings to his captive.

"My sin!" Redding snorted loudly. He was growing angry himself now; he realized that he stood a remarkably good chance of having to suffer to atone for some imaginary wrong to a heathen deity.

"To touch the Holy Ngah is to die," came from the scarcely moving lips of the man in the gaudy robe, "except to those ordained to do so. It is the judgment of the Holy Ngah itself."

He held the idol with one hand and pointed to it with the other. Light broke to Redding—a fuller light. The white idol Pepe Malana had brought was the Holy Ngah!

"But," Redding expostulated, "I did not know about this. The man who forced the god upon me—"

"Shall die also!" interrupted the leader. "Say no more!"

Redding frowned angrily.

"How is it, then, that you touch it?" he asked, before he could catch his tongue.

"I am the one ordained—cochinillo!" snapped the tall Karinundan. "I am the Pandita Ugbar, the priest of the Temple of Ngah. It was I," he continued proudly, "who first saw the Holy Ngah; it came to me as I stood on the shore of the sea, sitting in a boat of pure white and unaccompanied."

"Jolly treat ahead for me, all right," whispered Redding to himself.

The procession of almost naked savages, walking so close that the scabbards of their flame-shaped krises and cleaver-like barongs touched one another frequently, had now emerged from the jungle that lay in the lowlands along the coast. The ground here had an upward trend, and was covered with a thick growth of grasses; here and there stood a solitary cocoanut palm or an ihlang-ihlang, and now and then Redding saw starlike hibiscus flowers gleaming in some little copse. Occasionally they passed a low, round bungalow, extremely primitive, in the doors of which stood women and children agape with wonderment.

Redding had not been able to see far in advance of the party, and he was much interested when his bearers reached the crest of a low hill and began to descend. He could now obtain a view of that which lay ahead; he saw, in the midst of a valley a mile across, a village of huts clustering about a circular space walled in by a bamboo stock[illegible] center [illegible] a huge, round[illegible] hut—the Temple of Ngah, no doubt.

As the pandita and his men walked thru the outskirts of the village, the dusky inhabitants began to pour from their houses, all of them chanting in minor notes, paeons of praise to their priest, it is reasonable to believe, for his success in the work of saving for them their god, the Holy Ngah.

Shortly after entering the village Ben Redding was borne thru the gate to the stockade, and thence to the door of the great hut of bamboo and nipa, the roof of which was of thatched grasses.

With many strange-sounding words, the Pandita Ugbar set the idol in place upon a square pedestal of stone, which stood in the rear of the room, and which was ornamented with weird-shaped figures cut from mother-of-pearl. Redding noted that behind this pedestal there was an artificial pool of water, in which floated a small boat of pure white.

The captive was carried and placed upon a low altar of blackened stones before the grinning idol that had reminded both himself and little Silverthorn of the American Billikens. The Karinundans then drew Redding's hands above his head and bound them to a stake that had been driven into the earth at that end of the altar; his feet likewise were fastened to a stake that stood at the other end of the pile of blackened stones. Redding understood and groaned; for he knew they intended to offer him up as a burnt sacrifice!

But he had been in many tight places, and had always come out safely; and this thought furnished a measure of consolation. Besides, he told himself, there was little Kid Silverthorn with at least one revolver—and perhaps two.

There was a series of fanatical rites before the idol, which were brought to an end only when darkness came. Then lamps of seashell, burning cocoanut-oil with wicks of tree cotton, were lighted here and there. Following this, bundles of dry, resinous wood were brought and placed beside the intended victim. Redding struggled with all his might, but to no avail.

The Pandita Ugbar repaired to an anteroom for the purpose of donning a black robe, the robe he wore when there was a sacrifice.

All was silent for a few minutes. Redding hoped with a great hope for the coming of his little friend; continually his eyes sought the open doorway. Dimly he thought of the folks at home.

"You who have sinned against the Holy Ngah," a low, droning voice said, breaking in upon the big American's train of reflections, "you are to die to expiate your crime, as is the judgment of Ngah the Holy, Ngah the Savior of Souls."

Redding turned his head and saw, standing beside him, a figure in black, barely visible in the poor light of the lamps.

"Ngah the Holy," the voice droned on, "who came to me in a vessel of pure white, unaccompanied save by the spirits of departed Karinundans. Hail, thou Ngah"—he turned slightly to the idol—"and witness that this strange man from the unknown world is to pay for his sin with his life!"

The dark figure then went thru with a series of weird gestures, after which he seemed literally to go wild in a fever of fanatical enthusiasm. Drawing a kris from beneath his robe, he began to dance here and there, brandishing the keen weapon dangerously near to the onlookers as well as to the supine form on the bed of fire-blackened stones.

Redding closed his eyes to the wicked gleam of the murderous blade, altho he half wished for its point in his heart. It would be better, at least, than the flames.

CHAPTER III.

SILVERTHORN SEEKS HIS FRIEND.

THERE seemed to be the glow of a strong fire in little Silverthorn's eyes when he first began to feel a return of his senses. He turned over, and suddenly knew that the glow was but the rays of the fast-declining sun, shining beneath the roof of palm tops from its place on the distant horizon of the sea. Then he remembered, and sat up.

"Who on earth was the guy with the hairy limbs and face?"

The sound of his own voice brought it all back with great force—the Visayan, the idol, the absence of his friend Redding, the uncouth person who had attacked him from the rear. He rose, staggering, and wiped away a little blood from his temple.

He began to look about him. He saw that Redding's revolver and cartridge belt was gone, as were, indeed, his own. And, he reasoned, the man who had taken them undoubtedly knew of the use of firearms. So they had another enemy here on this accursed island of Karinunda—and, Silverthorn believed, one who was very powerful.

But to stand there idle and wait for the return of Redding was a thing little Silverthorn could not do; besides, Redding was his friend, and he might be even then in dire need of assistance. And, Silverthorn told himself aloud, if he was going to do anything before nightfall, he must be about it. So he set forth to take observations of the [illegible]untry, and also to lay plans for action when night had fallen.

Fortunately, he knew of the path that led thru the jungle, and soon he was stealthily following the procession that had by that time already reached the temple.

When he had entered the grasses of the higher ground he went on his hands and knees to avoid being seen by the women and children of the bungalows; and frequently he was forced to take a moment's shelter in a copse in order to escape the eyes of those who had been out to gather cocoanuts and young bamboo shoots for food.

In a thick patch of grasses on the brow of the hill that overlooked the village, little Silverthorn came to a final halt to await the passing of twilight; for it was not possible to enter the village unseen before darkness had settled down. With fast-beating heart he saw the Karinundans crowding about the gate to the inclosure that fenced in the high, dome-shaped hut; and he knew then that the object of their interest was the captive Redding.

As dusk drew on, there came to Silverthorn's quick ears a succession of dragging sounds from the rear, as of some one crawling thru the grasses. The little American, crouching low, crept out of the path of the thing that was approaching him.

In the passing of another minute a stalwart form went to its knees at the spot at which Silverthorn had lain in waiting, and peered over into the valley. The little American recognized him immediately; it was the mysterious person who had hurled him to the ground unconscious and then taken his revolver and Redding's!

Silverthorn lay as silent as the twinkling stars above him, thinking hard. He knew he needed weapons; he thought of stealing upon the dark figure from behind, springing upon him, and trying to recover the revolvers. But, considering the difference in their sizes, it was too desperate a chance for even him to take. This person, he ruminated, was no doubt a madman. The life of Ben Redding, he reasoned, might depend upon him; therefore he must choose no course unwisely.

When darkness had settled down thickly, the rim of the moon appeared on the horizon, a thing that caused Silverthorn's brows to knit with displeasure. Once more he knew that anything he did would have to be done quickly,

for the moon, with its flood of brilliant light, would be likely to foil him.

The hairy man also saw the rising moon; he began to skulk toward the village in the valley, a heavy American revolver in either hand. Cautiously, likewise skulking, Silverthorn followed.

In the outskirts of the village, the young American lost track of the uncouth person. But he regarded that as a matter of small importance—except there was the scant possibility that he might have found some opportunity to recover the weapons that he needed so much.

So little Silverthorn crept along between the rows of bark huts, choosing each step with care until he had reached the bamboo stockade which shut in the grounds about the temple of Ngah. Three minutes afterward he had climbed the wall, slippery as it was, and had dropped silently on the other side.

But as he started, creeping, toward the temple of nipa and bamboo, he was brought to a sudden halt by seeing three indistinct figures come swiftly toward him. He lay flat upon the earth, that he might not be seen. But one of the three persons stepped on his shoulder.

CHAPTER IV

WHO WAS BARTOLO?

THE apparent frenzy of the man in the dark robe grew to such a height that Redding began to watch him with a strange interest. He found and round the room where the chanting form, his kris glinting as dazzlingly as lightning. Soon the onlookers had fled from the scene as they there left it.

When they had gone the dancing man knocked out light after light, as the by accident, until all was dark. Following the extinguishing of the last lamp, Redding heard a voice whisper close to his ear:

"Come with me—quick!"

And at the same time his bonds were cut away.

The fear in the big American's heart was instantly turned to gladness. He got to his feet and followed the person who, to all appearances, was working in his behalf; and before they left the temple a small back door. Redding knew his companion had paused long enough to take the white idol from its pedestal.

Just as the two passed out into the night one of the Karinundans, having become suspicious, threw a lighted lamp into the great room. Standing by the empty pedestal there was a stalwart, hairy man, for reason, in each hand a heavy, blued revolver.

Upon seeing that the idol was gone, the uncouth one uttered a wild cry of disappointment, and darted out of the temple by the door thru which Redding and his rescuer had passed but a moment before. Quickly he was upon the two, and, his eyes long accustomed to darkness by reason of many hundred jungle nights, he had no difficulty in distinguishing the American from the other. Regarding Redding by far the most formidable, he aimed one of the weapons. But when he would have pulled the trigger, he stepped on something that gave under his foot, then rose and flung a pair of sinewy, albeit small, arms about his neck.

It was little Silverthorn, he had recognized Redding just as the would-be assassin was leveling the revolver.

"Fere, Ben, quick!" he cried in guarded tones. "This guy's got our guns, and let's take 'em!"

Redding knew the voice of his friend instantly.

Redding knew the voice of his friend instantly. He sprang upon the hairy one and bore him heavily to the earth. One of the revolvers cracked, but the bullet went wild. However, before Redding and Silverthorn could wrest either of the weapons from the ironlike grasp, the mysterious person in the dark robe whispered excitedly:

"The shot is bringing the Karinundans —come, senors, for your lives!"

Redding sprang to his feet, dragging Silverthorn after him, and made for the bamboo wall. The man in the pandita's robe, still carrying the once more stolen idol, reached the top of the stockade with remarkable celerity, despite his burden, and leaped to the ground on the other side. Redding followed a second later.

Silverthorn was not so fortunate; a pair of brown hands snatched him back from the top of the wall at the very moment when he had gathered himself for his leap! Redding uttered a cry that came from his heart, and started back. No doubt he would have gone, had not the voice of his robed companion said to him:

"Stay, senor—they would capture you, too; and then who would there be to assist the little senor in making an escape? The Karinundans are terribly angry because I struck their priest, the Pandita Ughat, insensible, and impersonated him to save you. Truly, your friend needs that you be free to work for him. Besides, he cannot be offered up as a sacrifice until the god Ngah is found and put back on its pedestal."

Redding mentally agreed. He turned from the stockade with the question:

"Who are you?"

"I am Pepe Malana, the Visayan, senor."

"You—look out there, Pepe!"

Redding's warning came too late. The form of the hairy man had darted forward under cover of darkness, snatched the white idol from beneath Pepe's arm, and disappeared quickly in the thick gloom. Neither the Visayan nor the American made any attempt to follow the uncouth person who was so interested as the Karinundans and the Visayan to possess the Holy Ngah. It was evidently useless.

Redding grasped the arm of his new friend.

"Let us get away immediately," he said. "When those savages have all had a look at the little senor they will be after us."

Pepe Malana seemed not to have heard. He stood staring into the darkness that had swallowed up the strange man.

"El diablo!" he fumed bitterly. "That accursed Bartolo, son of perdition that he is!"

Redding dragged the Visayan toward the hills. Pepe then appeared to realize the gravity of their situation once more, and they began to run. Fortunately, too soon, for at that moment a mob of the Karinundans, howling and smarling like so many wolves, began pilling over the bamboo stockade.

Who, Redding asked himself as he ran, was Bartolo?

The conclusion of this capital story will be found in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a trial subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

The Sword of Phiops

:-: Or, :-:

A Detective's Problem

By Wilder Anthony

Begun in *No. 32*, September 16. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER III.

IT WAS a dejected little group that gathered in one of the lower rooms of the house an hour after Kotchana disappeared. A most thorough search of the premises had failed to reveal him, and although all the house had evidently been occupied by five or six people, three Hindus had been seen in the aeroplane, but Wolfert thought it probable that the others had escaped before the police began their search. The three in the plane Zarl had been one, while the third was undoubtedly one of her master's Hindu followers.

"Well, I suppose we've lost Morton declared hopelessly, after he had dismissed his crestfallen squad of policemen and returned to his companions, "that Kotchana will never return here. With that airboat of his, which, judging from the little I saw of it, is about the smallest machine of its kind in existence, he will be able to establish a new base wherever he likes. Which he presumably has had a trifle like that up his sleeve?"

"I should have," Wolfert gloomily observed, "if might have known that he would not be taken so easily. The man is far too clever to have a burrow with only one exit, and nothing could serve his purpose better than an aeroplane. I was even warned of the machine by Zarl—fool that I am! But we mustn't give up. We'll simply have to begin all over again and seine the city until we get track of him; that's all."

"Almost an endless task, I should say," Denton remarked. "It will take months at least to discover his new base, and in the meantime——" He paused significantly, and he declared not voice the thought in his mind.

"Still, it's not altogether hopeless, Denton, not altogether hopeless," Adam Wolfert grunted, between long deep pulls at his pipe. "We've merely lost another trick; but the game is still in progress, and we are not entirely without resource. Kotchana will never leave this part of the country until his work here is done, and that can never be so long as we are alive. We know that he must maintain a considerable body of his horrible Things somewhere, and he never used this house for that purpose.

"Foley shadowed one of his men to a place on the river front the other day, and perhaps—by George!" His eyes suddenly brightened, and he half rose in his excitement.

"The dictaphone, Morton!" he exclaimed. "Why didn't I think of that before? It's been crowded out of my head by other matters, but it's still attached to the telephone wires of this house, and Kotchana must have used his phone since I adjusted it. Nothing is more natural than that he should communicate with his men by telephone, and the dictaphone may give us just the clew we need. It's almost day now—in another hour or so we can go over to Standish's and find out for certain."

A grin of delighted hope spread over Inspector Morton's rugged face. "There's truth in that!" he exclaimed. "Let's hope that you're right. We may be able to hit the trail while it is still warm and before Kotchana will expect us."

The three men could hardly restrain their impatience when, nearly two hours later, they gathered around the dictaphone, which Wolfert had removed from Mr. Standish's attic and carried to his own office, and waited for the detective to put it in operation.

At first a loud buzzing was the only result, then came the reproduction of a conversation with the market man; but finally, just as they were beginning to lose hope, a high-pitched, foreign voice, which they knew to be the voice of Kara Kotchana himself, called for a number. Then there followed a short talk in Hindustani, which Denton was able to translate, and which proved beyond a doubt that they were on the right track.

In five minutes Wolfert had called up "Information" and discovered that the number Kotchana had called was that of a telephone located in the very same building on the river to which Foley had traced one of the Hindus. When he learned this, Adam Wolfert chuckled delightedly and rubbed his lean hands together in complete satisfaction.

"Things begin to dovetail, you see," he said, "and there is still a chance for us, altho we must make haste slowly. We mustn't let him slip away in that aeroplane again if we can help it. Have a couple of your best men watch the building, Inspector, while you go home and get some sleep. We shall need fresh brains and muscles for the work ahead of us."

When Inspector Morton and Captain Denton had departed, Adam Wolfert, who often thought best of sleep himself when under the stimulus of important work, left his office and ascended to the top of the city's tallest building, a huge edifice thirty stories high. Here he sat down at the base of a ventilator cap and produced a pair of field glasses with which he began to study the roofs of the buildings along the harbor and river front. For a long time he swept his glasses from one point to another, but at last he focused them on the flat roof of a brick structure which rose up a little more than two hundred feet. Thru the powerful lenses he could make out a little shed at one corner of the roof, and when he did this he smiled grimly.

"That must be it," he thought, "and from here it looks as if the scheme would work. Now for the girl. I must wait until she communicates with me."

Putting the glasses in his pocket case, he left the building and returned to his office, where he spent nearly all the remainder of that day working at something which looked very much like an ordinary baking-powder can with the exposed works of an alarm clock fastened to the cover.

It was ten o'clock that night when the detective finally allowed himself to think of anything but his work. He had worked steadily, first in his office, then he had gone out for a couple of hours, to return and eat a belated meal—his first that day. After he had eaten, however, and given some careful instructions to one of his assistants, he felt that he would do nothing more that night, and he suddenly discovered that he was very tired.

Ordinarily Adam Wolfert was an exceedingly light sleeper. He had the happy faculty of being able to rest thoroly, and still awaken at the slightest sound or touch in full possession of all his senses; but tonight he was dog-tired and he slept more soundly than before in months. He had no way of

knowing how long he had been asleep when he became aware of a strange sense of oppression, a stifling sensation, which caused him to gasp and toss about in his efforts to get air. Then, as consciousness fully returned, he discovered that he was not alone in the bed; a heavy weight was pressing down on him, and a constantly tightening band was around his throat. Two seconds later Adam Wolfert was fighting for his life.

A compact hairy thing, hard almost as stone, and with talons of steel that dug into his throat like pincers, was squatting over him, making horrible guttural noises, while its breath came in rasping pants that felt like live steam on the detective's face. With a tremendous heave, which called into action every muscle in his lean, sinewy body, Wolfert managed to break that awful grip on his windpipe and bury himself in the blankets so that they formed a kind of shield for his face and throat. The instant he awoke he had guessed that the thing which choked him was the same that had attacked Denton, and he knew that this was a struggle to the death.

As he ducked beneath the bedclothes, his right hand reached out under the pillow in a desperate search for the revolver he had put there on retiring. For an instant he groped blindly; then, just as those wiry fingers were clamping around his neck again, his hand found the weapon. With another powerful wrench he managed to turn his body a little and press the muzzle of the heavy revolver against that hairy torso; then he pulled the trigger and kept on pulling it until the gun was empty.

For several long minutes the detective lay perfectly still, breathing deep, tho painful, draughts of invigorating air and regaining his strength and nerve. At last he slid gingerly out of the bed and reached for the electric switch. As the room blazed into light his shattered nervous system made it hard for him to repress a scream at the sight which met his eyes.

Stretched across the bed in the horribly contorted huddle of a wild beast violently killed, lay a dark, hairy creature of uncertain breed. At first glance, Wolfert thought it was a great anthropoid ape; but a closer inspection convinced him that it must be a man, for it lacked the prehensile toes of the Simiadae family, and it had no tail. Otherwise it was as much ape as human, and far more repulsive in appearance than any specimen of either that Wolfert had ever seen. It was not large, not more than four feet tall, and it could not have weighed over one hundred pounds; but the detective's aching throat was proof enough of its strength.

When he had gazed his fill of the thing, pondering meanwhile upon the devilish knowledge and cunning that made Kotchana the master of such monsters, Wolfert dragged it off the bed into a corner and threw a rug over it. A brief examination of his rooms showed him that the intruder had been entirely alone, and that it had entered thru a window which it had reached from the fire-escape and forced with all *the skill of a trained second-story* [illegible] Captain Denton and Inspector Morton, in answer to a telephone message, came around to view the remains.

"Gad!" the explorer exclaimed, when his eyes fell on the huddled corpse, "it's an Abyssinian wild man, the rarest breed of savage in the world. I saw one in the jungle years ago. They walk on all fours most of the time, climb like monkeys, eat grass and leaves when they can't get fruit, and they have no known language. No wonder Philips was so sure he'd seen a visitor from the lower world. This Kotchana is certainly a wonder—I don't see how he ever smuggled a thing like that into the city. You did a mighty good job when you killed it, Wolfert."

"Amen to that!" Inspector Morton fervently agreed. "And now for the arch-fiend himself, the man who furnishes the brains for all these mongrel creatures. It's high time he was put where his peculiar talents can harm no one."

It was a little after noon that day when Adam Wolfert received the telephone call from Zari for which he had been hoping and waiting, and the detective was delighted to find that Kotchana was, as he guessed, now living in the building on the river front which housed nearly a score of his followers. The slave-girl had little to say—as on the occasions of her visits, she seemed possessed with the fear of her master—but she listened readily, while the detective gave her certain careful directions, and in the end she promised to do exactly what he asked.

Adam Wolfert grinned to himself when he left the telephone and stepped into the next room to pack the clockwork contrivance he had made on the previous day into a small handbag. Then he left the office.

About nine that same evening Wolfert and Inspector Morton left police headquarters and walked to the former's rooms. Their plans for Kotchana's capture were already as nearly perfect as they could make them, and they had decided to raid his stronghold shortly after midnight. Morton had arranged that a swift motor boat, filled with armed policemen, should guard the house on the river side, while the two detectives intended to lead the landward attack in person. Already the building was being watched by a dozen pairs of eyes, and it would be a miracle indeed if Kotchana managed to escape this time.

As he stepped into the vestibule which lay between the hall and his room and which was always left unlocked, Wolfert started back and gave vent to a low exclamation of surprise. The next instant, however, he moved forward and stooped over the dark figure that lay sprawled out just inside the door.

"My God!" he muttered, thru ashen lips, while his facial muscles twitched visibly like those of a man in pain. "Good God, Morton! Of all the deviltry that fiend has done, this is the worst! She tried to help us and he found it out. I said I would protect her, too; but now——"

"What's the matter, man?" Inspector Morton, who from his position behind his companion could not see the figure lying there in the shadow, was alarmed, and he showed it. "What is it, Wolfert?"

"It's the little slave-girl, Zari," Wolfert answered, while his nimble fingers felt at the girl's neck artery to see if her pulse still beat. "She must have fled here to me and dropped at the door when she found me absent. But thank God she's not dead! Open that door and get some light, Morton. We must see what has happened to her."

Inspector Morton lost no time in obeying orders, and in a couple of minutes Wolfert had placed Zari's unconscious body on a couch in his room and loosened her cloak. As the garment fell back from the girl's shoulders both men caught their breath in an involuntary gasp of horror, while Wolfert's lips parted in a terrible snarl of rage. Criss-crossed on the delicate back and shoulders of the slave-girl, cut deep into the soft flesh so that blood oozed and dripped from them, was a mass of terrible welts and bruises. Seeing that horribly mutilated back, no one could wonder why the girl had fainted; the wonder was how she had lived to reach the detective's door.

"Whipped, by Heaven! She's been lashed nearly to death, Wolfert!" Inspector Morton's big hands slowly closed and opened as he shot out the words. "I've read that the Turks do such things in their d—d harems, but I never really believed it until now. He must have found out, and——"

"Never mind all that," Wolfert cut in, in a voice like the rasp of a file. "The child is badly hurt, but she's alive, and there's a good chance of her remaining so if we're quick. Get the nearest station on the telephone and tell 'em to hurry an ambulance over here. Kotchana's time will come—presently."

While his companion was telephoning, the detective did his best to make the slave-girl comfortable. As he stooped over the beautiful face, now so still and white, his own features worked spasmodically, showing a feeling which he made no attempt to hide. Up to the time of his first strange meeting with this odd member of the Turk's hou[illegible] Adam Wolfert had never felt any [illegible] akin [illegible] his life. He was probably one of the most perfect reasoning machines that the world ever produced, and as such all emotions, particularly love, were abhorrent to him; but at that moment his guard was down, and for a little he completely forgot himself as he worked feverishly over this one being who had succeeded in disturbing the poise of his cold, precise, but admirably balanced mind.

Something of the intensity of his feeling and determination to save her must have communicated itself to Zari even in her unconscious state, for Morton had not finished his telephoning when she moved restlessly and opened her eyes. For one soul-baring instant the two exchanged glances; then Wolfert smiled down into those wonderful orbs which always reminded him of forest pools in the moonlight.

"Feeling better, Zari?" he asked, his voice as tender as a woman's. "We'll have you right as day in no time. You're safe now."

Zari smiled dazzlingly even in her pain and weakness and snuggled closer into the hollow of his shoulder. Something she saw in Wolfert's eyes seemed to act on her like a powerful stimulant, for the color came back into her cheeks with a rush and she looked almost well again.

"He found out," she whispered weakly, "and he beat me. He would have killed me, but I escaped and came to tell you that it is ready. The little box you gave me is hidden in the air monster, and he does not know." She smiled again, and her little hand closed around the detective's fingers in the first caress they had known since he was a boy at his mother's knee.

As he sensed the meaning in her words, Adam Wolfert was brought back to a sudden realization of his position, and he straightened up just in time to hear the clanging of a gong as the ambulance turned into the street below. Ten minutes later, under the watchful eyes of a white-coated interne, who had assured Wolfert that she was in no real danger, Zari was in the ambulance on her way to the hospital, and the two detectives were alone.

Wolfert, his face like granite, slowly filled and lighted the unsavory pipe, which was his almost constant solace, while the inspector bit the end from a cigar.

"Good Lord!" Morton finally exclaimed. "What will that inhuman brute do next, I wonder? He must be as cold-blooded as a jellyfish. Now that he's spotted the girl I suppose all our plans are useless. He'll be on his guard, won't he?"

"Not necessarily," Wolfert answered grimly, as he exhaled a mouthful of smoke. "From what Zari told me I gather that he does not know of our impending attack, or what I have done to prevent his escape. He discovered merely that the girl had been in touch with me."

"But the aeroplane, man! Let him but set his feet in that and he can laugh at all our efforts to catch him."

"He can laugh," Wolfert admitted, with a grim, blood-curdling chuckle, pausing in his nervous pacing of the floor, "but if he does it will be the last laugh he will enjoy in this world. Before his laugh is ended he will be on his way to join that kindred spirit which dwells in hell. I have fixed the plane, Morton. He keeps it on the roof of his devil's nest, and Zari has planted a bomb in it which is timed to explode at one o'clock. It will wreck the machine and cut off Kotchana's escape by that route, but we must time our raid so that we shall be at the doors a little before the explosion occurs. Then, you see, he won't have time to change his plans."

It was exactly twelve forty-five when the two detectives approached the huge, gloomy structure which housed Kotchana and his Thugs. As they drew near they were accosted by a man who stepped out of the mouth of an alley. It was Tim Foley, Wolfert's chief assistant.

"Everything is ready, sir," he said, in a low tone. "The house is completely surrounded and the police boat is at the rear. We've already got a basement window opened, and we can get in quietly that way."

"Good!" Wolfert smiled grimly in the darkness. "Let half of the men follow us inside, Foley, and have the rest stay where they are. No noise, mind, until the last minute, but if you can't get them alive, shoot to kill. If Kotchana and his men are inside those walls, we must get 'em all or die in the effort."

There was no sound in the building as Wolfert and Morton, closely followed by a squad of well-armed policemen, let themselves down thru the cellar window and crept across the ink-black basement to the door which led into the regions above. They soon had this open, and in single file, Wolfert leading, they stole thru a dimly lighted passageway toward a door at its farther end. They had almost reached this, when there was a shrill outcry from above stairs, some one shouted a few words in a strange tongue, and there was a rush of feet across the floor. Wolfert just glimpsed the vanishing figure of a dark-skinned man on the stairs above as he threw open the door in front of him and sprang into the room it revealed.

This room was large and brilliantly lighted. Its floor was covered with thick rugs, and it was furnished thruout like the den of an Oriental prince. A sweet, sensuous perfume was in the air and a charcoal brazier in one corner made the place almost oppressively warm. Hangings of rich and costly materials hid the walls, and at regular intervals these hangings bore in red and gold the sign of the crescent—the brand that Kotchana always stamped upon his victims. Standing at the farther end of the room, facing the door, was a tall, thin man dressed in a loose Turkish costume. His head was covered by a red tarboosh and he held a long-stemmed pipe in one hand, while the other rested against the wall behind him; his lean, repulsive features bore the half-startled expression of one suddenly aroused when he has every reason to feel secure and at his ease. The tall man was Dr. Kara Kotchana.

Adam Wolfert uttered a low cry of unholy joy when he saw him.

"Stand where you are!" he ordered. "I've cornered you at last, you fiend, and I'll shoot if you move so much as a finger."

For an instant Kotchana stared at him in calm insolence, then he smiled inscrutably, and the hand against the wall pressed a little. Wolfert had only time to fire once as the wall opened and closed again and Kotchana disappeared behind it.

For a few frantic seconds Wolfert and Morton, who was close beside him, tried wildly and vainly to find the hidden spring which opened the secret way; but they could not, and the inspector was gnashing his teeth in a fury, when Wolfert turned toward the door.

"The roof!" he cried. "He's making for the roof, inspector, and we must beat him to it!"

He dashed out of the room and raced up the stairs.

By this time the building was a perfect bedlam of sound. Shots, oaths, and screams in a strange foreign tongue proved that the police were doing their work thoroly. Short, half-naked Hindus scurried about like rats in the face of an invading flood, and like rats they fought with tooth and nail when they were cornered; but the two detectives paid little attention to them. Pausing only long enough to pistol a Thug, who struck with a crooked knife at Wolfert as he passed, they went up the stairs three at a time until they reached the roof.

Here they found a number of Hindus grouped around the doorway of the shed that housed the aeroplane, and even as they ran forward a long, bat-shaped thing of metal was rolled out onto the open roof and stood throbbing and purring as tho eager to be off. Kotchana was already seated in the operating saddle, and as his men piled in behind him, he pulled a lever, and the aeroplane shot up into the air like a great bird. As it left the roof, Inspector Morton emptied his revolver into it, and several of the Hindus toppled and fell; but Kotchana was apparently unhit, and Morton swore helplessly.

"Gone again!" he raged. "Just when I was sure we had him fairly cornered I——"

He broke off to watch Wolfert, who, instead of showing anger or dismay at the Turk's escape, was crouching on the roof and looking at his watch.

"Wait, wait!" the detective cried, raising his eyes to the aeroplane. "We've been a little too quick—it still lacks nearly a minute of the time that the bomb——"

By then the aeroplane, still brightly lighted and looking like a huge star, was well out over the river at an altitude of some five hundred feet. Just as Wolfert looked up the machine paused a little in its flight, and there came floating down to the men on the roof that well-known taunting laugh, which told them that Kotchana was still unhurt and unafraid; but this time that devilish laughter was suddenly cut short. At one instant the aeroplane stood out plain and distinct like a ball of fire against the dark sky, in the next it had utterly disappeared. There was a deep boom in the air like the explosion of a giant sky-rocket, a splashing of falling debris in the water far below, and Kara Kotchana had gone forever.

The End.

A Pioneer.

The lecturer was most emphatic upon the point. "It is to the pioneers of big movements—the men who are always in the forefront—that the honor of this fair country of ours belongs," he had said.

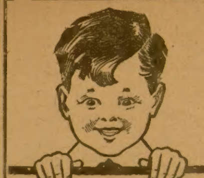
At the close of the lecture an old woman approached him and shook hands, thanking him for speaking so kindly of her son.

"I think you have made a mistake. I don't know your son, and I cannot have mentioned his name tonight," said the lecturer.

"Yes, you did. My son is one of those pioneers of big movements."

"Oh, I see. And what is your son, madam?"

"What is he?" the proud mother asked, in a surprised tone. "Man, he walks in front of the new steam roller with a red flag."



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Or, The Heiress of Hedstone Hall

By T. C. Harbaugh

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CHAPTER XIII.

WHAT DAN DID.

LET Doctor Burke tell all he knows!" These words from the lips of Mona, the blind girl, created a sensation in Bradley Toots' coroner's court.

"I have told all," answered Nicholas Burke. "I hope I am not to be charged with the murder of my unfortunate patient."

"You are not even suspected of it, doctor," obsequiously retorted the slavish Toots. "We are not here to arraign the innocent, but to discover the guilty. I think no further investigation is needed," he turned to the jury. "Justice in this instance, I trust, will be swift and sure. That law-abiding community must not rest under the burden of an undiscovered crime." And he swelled up like a toad with self-importance.

Lucille saw that all was over. She rose slowly to her feet and went over to Mona. What she whispered in the blind girl's ear was not heard by the curious crowd, and presently the two girls withdrew and went slowly and in silence up the stair.

"What have they done?" Lucille asked Dan, an hour later, when she met him in the upper passageway, an apologetic look on his face and a half-suppressed murmur on his tongue.

"They have brought in a verdict of willful murder against Mr. Seaforth, and Mona has been named as an accomplice."

The heiress of Hedstone Hall did not speak.

"I hope you won't think hard of me, Miss Lucile," continued Dan. "I was sworry to tell the truth, the whole truth, and to keep nothing back. I dared not lie, Miss Lucile."

"I want no one to lie for my sake!" cried the fair girl. "I know you told just what you should, Dan. You could not do otherwise; but I don't believe Mona guilty."

"Neither do I," assented Dan. "It'll be a fight, tho, to clear him."

"When he returns he will dissipate all unjust suspicions."

"But when will he come back?"

Lucille did not know. She very thought that Hasketh might never return to face his accusers passed over her mind like a dying cloud, dark as night at midnight.

"Dan," said she, "did you see the man who came here but lately?"

"The fellow I wanted to kick off the front step?"

"He must have been the one."

"Well, what of him, Miss Lucie?"

"He is a detective."

"What, that——"

"That same man, Dan. He calls him self Martin Box, and says he came from Hasketh."

"But why didn't Hasketh come and not that man?"

Lucille shook her head, unable to articulate.

"You must find Martin Box, Dan," she went on, when she had pulled herself together, "and have him somewhere in Ashboro. Tell him everything that happened at the inquest. Possibly he knows it by this time. You will do this for me, Dan?"

"I'll do anything for you, Miss Lucie, only you must not think hardsef me for my evidence."

She held out her hands and looked smilingly into his face.

"Mona had no hand in the dark deed," she continued. "She is the victim of circumstances."

"But if they should prove it on her——"

"They cannot!" interrupted the white-faced girl. "She commanded Nicholas Burke to tell all he knew, and he did not."

"I'd like to choke the truth out of him," almost hissed Dan Gustin. "I'm equal to the task. Just look at my hands."

"I've got to fight for honor and Hedstone Hall now!" Lucille cried. "According to a paper signed by Uncle Morgan, I must either become the wife of Doctor Burke or go hence an exile."

"Why did he sign such an infamous order?"

"That is for the future to determine. I saw it in black and white."

"Where?"

"In the library."

"Who has that paper?"

"Nicholas Burke."

"The——"

Dan did not complete his sentence.

"There is another thing, Dan," she resumed. "We must trace the letter I never got—the one which Hasketh sent me and which was deposited in the postoffice by Noah Nuff."

"We'll trace it all right!" exclaimed Dan, clinching his enormous hands. "Don't you despair for a holy minute, Miss Lucie."

"I'll keep up my spirits." She smiled a wan smile, but it brightened her face a little for a passing moment.

Dan had left her his own. He would see Martin Box at once, but not until he had performed a little detective work himself. Mona must be found and entered it as the magnifying glass was casting their longest shadows.

Everywhere there were little groups discussing the events of the day. He drew near to several of these gatherings and listened intently. The sentiment was against Hasketh Seaforth. His sudden flight did not weigh in his favor. If he was dead, why had he not disappeared between two days? It looked dark for Lucille's lover. Disgusted with the overwhelming sentiment, Dan left these outer quarters.

He discovered without much effort that Martin Box was stopping at the hotel. He could be found when wanted. He was not going to run away if he was a detective.

At last Dan mounted the steps which led into the postmaster's residence. The office had been closed for the night, and he would in all likelihood find Phineas Caldwell at home.

Seated in his easy chair, enjoying his second pipe, Mr. Caldwell looked at peace with the world. He was the official of the town, a man of parts and looked up to by many. It was his boast that he always advocated improvement, was at head of the village council, and now and then led the van for a forward step if had a rich basis voice.

Dan bowed as he was let into the presence of this great man and took the proffered chair.

"I haven't got long to stay," said he, going right at the subject nearest his heart. "I'm here on a little mission, Phineas."

"And I'm at leisure," was the reply. "You don't come to see me often, Dan."

"That's a fact, sir. Do you ever have occasion to trace lost letters?"

There was just the slightest start on the postmaster's part.

"Have you had a letter lost?" he asked, leaning forward.

"No, but a friend of mine has."

"Lost, as a rule, are hard to trace," observed Phineas. "When was this particular one lost?"

"But a few days ago."

"Oh, perhaps you haven't waited long enough. It may reach its destination."

"Not this one," said Dan, with emphasis. "It didn't have to go far. There was no sorting of this letter by which it might have been lost."

"Ah!"

Dan gathered for the final plunge.

"This letter was left in your office, Phineas," he went on. "It was to remain there till I called for it, and it was addressed to Miss Caroline Van Cleve of Hedstone Hall. I guess you follow me, Phineas?"

"I do. What, a letter for Miss Van Cleve lost between my office and Hedstone Hall? Impossible! I say impossible, unless it was lost after it left the office."

Dan Gustin leaned impulsively forward and leered into the postmaster's face.

"It never left your office! It was delivered to some one for whom it was not intended!"

A deep flush overspread the face which Dan confronted. The hue extended to the temples.

"Look here!" cried Phineas Caldwell, "you don't mean to insinuate that I am derelict in my duties?"

Dan crossed his legs with the nonchalance of a cool veteran.

"That is it exactly," he said, with stiffening lips. "I say that you allowed that letter to pass into wrong hands."

"I——"

"Phineas Caldwell, postmaster of Ashboro!"

"This is unbearable!" exclaimed Phineas. "That an official of the United States of America should be charged with a crime is infamous. I will not submit to it."

He was rising to his feet when Dan suddenly shot forward and with a heavy hand forced him back into the chair.

"That letter was sent by Hasketh Seaforth to Miss Lucille of Hedstone Hall, but she never got it. I called for her mail the day it was mailed and for other days after, and I was never intrusted with it. Who got that letter?"

"It must have been stolen."

"It was stolen, and I am looking at the thief right now!"

The hue on the postmaster's face changed from crimson to ash.

"I'm not going to go till I know who got Miss Lucie's letter," continued the cool-headed Dan, while his grip was tightening on Phineas' shoulder. "You are president of the council and you sing at funerals. You are a miserable wolf in sheep's clothing. Tell me who got that letter, or by the living God, I'll choke you to death!"

The hand flitted from shoulder to throat. Dan's eyes seemed to bulge from his head.

"I mean every bloomin' word of it!" he cried, "It's the truth now, or death!"

The postmaster of Ashboro was getting black in the face.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE WORM TURNS.

MR. DAN GUSTIN committed no blunder when he went to the house of the postmaster of Ashboro.

He had chosen his quarry with a good deal of cleverness, and when he saw the face into which he had quite certain he had run the game to earth.

"The truth about that letter!" repeated Dan and his grip tightened on Phineas Caldwell's throat.

The man gasped for breath. Dan loosened his grip a little and cried:

"You won't give me away, Dan?" beseeched his victim.

"I make no foolish promises," was the reply. "You didn't give Miss Lucie's letter to me when I came for it."

"I did not."

"Who got it, then?"

"I gave it to Doctor Dredge."

"Oh, the villain!" Dan, a smile gathering at his lips. "I see! Two birds of one feather, you know. You would take it to Med Van Cleve? So would I, only I would have thought. You violated your official oath."

"Let's drop this, Dan."

"Your conscience and yourself for that. So the little doctor got it?"

"Yes."

"That's all, Phineas," and Dan stepped back triumphant.

As he turned toward the door a pair of very anxious eyes followed him.

"What are you going to do, Dan?"

"Never you mind!" and Dan took across the little room. "You don't think Dan Gustin is a blooming idiot, do you?" He left the postmaster man white in his chair and closed the door behind him. Ten minutes later he tramped unceremoniously into Les Dredge's office.

The little doctor was seated at his table filling some capsules with a grayish powder. He looked up at the intruder and bowed stiffly. Dan did not sit down, but went over to where the doctor was and stood him for a moment.

"I've come for the letter, doctor," said he, suddenly.

Dredge looked up with a perceptible start.

"The—letter?" he cried.

"Miss Lucie's letter—the one she never got."

Dredge fought himself into self-composure. He put on an insulted air.

"Why, man, I'm exclaimed, "what have I to do with Miss Lucie's correspondence?"

"A good deal, if somebody hasn't lied. Phineas Caldwell gave you that particular letter, and I'm going to stay here till I get it."

There was a volume of determination in the speaker's voice.

"Seems to me your assumption is monumental!" cried Dredge. "Just as if I'm cruked!"

"You're not as straight as a pine," flashed the immovable Dan.

"I won't be browbeaten by a fellow of your ilk."

"Oh, you won't, eh?"

"Not as long as my name is Les Dredge!" Dan's lips curled with grim humor.

"Where is it, doctor?" said he.

Dredge sprang to his feet so suddenly that Dan recoiled a pace.

"Get out!" the little doctor vociferated with the mien of a lion. "This is my house——"

"And it's my business to be here," was the instant interruption.

The two men faced each other like

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gladiators. Dan was the taller, but there was strength in the short limbs of the doctor of Ashboro.

"I've got no letters that are not mine by right," Dredge continued. "I'm no thief."

"Perhaps not, but you are a receiver of stolen goods. When Philmess Caldwell gave you Miss Lucie's letter you put it to your own use. Come, I want it."

Leo Dredge moved back to the table and opened a drawer. Dan followed like a hound on a hot trail. He saw a bankroll in the drawer's eyes.

All at once something was jerked out of the drawer, and the next moment Dan staggered across the room with a cry of pain. His eyes seemed molten lead. The room and its contents vanished in a twinkling. He was standing in utter darkness. It seemed that his very blood was on fire.

"Now, get out, will you?" said a harsh voice in his ear, and he was seized and hustled away.

In another moment the cooler air struck his face; he fell against one of the pillars of the veranda, and then, failing to maintain his equilibrium, toppled from the porch to the ground.

His brain worked rapidly. Perhaps he had gone too far. His tactics had been too strenuous; he had met his match in the little doctor. Frenzied with pain he staggered away. It was all night to him now. Perhaps he had been blinded forever by the infernal powder.

"What's the matter, man?" said a voice at his elbow.

Dan groped with his hands.

"Who is it?" he asked.

"It's Noah Nutt."

"You, Noah? I'm blind!"

"What, Dan? Blind? In the name of God, what's happened?"

"Don't ask me now. Take me to the hotel."

"Why not over to the Hall?" The voice was full of sympathy.

"To the hotel, I say," replied Dan. "I want to send a man there."

Noah took his arm and turned up the street.

"Where have you been, Dan?" he asked.

"It was all about Miss Lucie's lost letter, the one Hasketh Scarforth sent her and which she never got."

"I know something about it, for I mailed that letter."

"Yes?"

"Phin Caldwell, the skunk, stole it."

"He did, but not for himself. Are we almost there?"

"We're there now," and Dan was helped up the steps that led into the hostelry.

"I want to see Martin Box," he cried. "I want to see him at once."

"He's not in just now."

Dan groaned in his agony.

"When will he come back?" he wailed. "I don't know, and he didn't leave any word when he went out."

"Dan," put in Noah, "you'll have to have medical aid. We'll go down to Doc Dredge."

Dan recoiled with a horrid curse.

"Do you think that when a man's bitten by a rattlesnake he goes back to the den to be cured?"

"He's not likely that he would. Then you ought not go to the Hall."

"I'll go."

The servant turned in the direction from which the landlord's voice had come.

"When Martin Box comes back," said he, "tell him to follow me to Dane Hall at once. The devil's to pay, and Satan is going to get every penny that's coming to him."

Out into the night again went Dan and Noah. The tortured man groaned in his agony as he hardly noticed Noah's sympathetic words. He was thinking as he never thought before, and all the time his head was throbbing unceasingly.

He started at last as a woman's tones fell upon his ear.

"I didn't mean to get it, Miss Lucie," cried he, "but I've struck the trail."

Lucille uttered a cry of horror when she drew near and recognized Dan.

"I want to get this devil-fire out of my eyes!" the man cried. "It seems to be eating them up. I'm as blind as Mona."

A cry came down the broad stair. It was from the blind girl herself.

"We're in trouble in misfortune," Dan replied to the voice. "I may never see again, but I've got a hand that can kill!"

Dan's eyes were bathed by the heiress of Hedstone Hall and the pain was alleviated.

"Doctor Burke is in the house. He just came," said Noah.

Lucille looked up with a strange countenance.

"He might help you, Dan," said she. "You know what I think of that man, but—"

"It's going from one poison to another," growled Dan. "Where is this doctor?"

Lucille stepped back as the figure of Nicholas Burke made its appearance in the doorway.

"This man is in agony," she said. "It will be humanity to do something for him."

Doctor Burke came forward with a professional air. The light was held close to the blind man's face. He winced, but he brought every energy to his aid.

"It's a serious case," said Nicholas Burke. "I don't understand where the man could have met with such a misfortune."

"Ask Leo Dredge!" hissed Dan. "He threw the powder in my face."

"Doctor Dredge!" cried Burke, with assumed incredulity. "Why, man, he is the last one to do you harm. Your word, I say, unsupported, would stand against his!"

Dan started. There was a world of truth in what Nicholas Burke had said. Dredge had the confidence of the whole community. In a practice of twenty years he had never been charged with wrongdoing. Dan Gustin's word would not stand against Leo Dredge's.

The blinded man clinched his hands. He felt that he was powerless.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ULTIMATUM.

IT WAS after the funeral of the master of Hedstone Hall and Lucille still lingered in the old mansion. With a woman's determination she awaited the next movement of Nicholas Burke. Would he attempt to carry out the mandate of the dead? Lucille was confident that the document had been obtained under his influence, but there was no disputing her uncle's signature. The continued absence of Hasketh Scarforth was a mystery. She doubted not that he had explained it in the letter which never reached her, and which, had it already cost Dan dearly, and that letter was still in Leo Dredge's possession. Else why had he resisted Dan in such a terrible manner?

She had learned that the sentiment of Ashboro and surrounding country was against Hasketh, and she did not wonder when she recurred to his sudden flight; but loving him with her whole soul, she could not give him the benefit of all doubts, believing that the time would come when the sky would be cleared.

There was one thing that kept her love aflame above all others. If Morgan Dairay had fallen a victim to curare poison, how could Hasketh have retained it? He had never visited the land where it was prepared. Lucille doubted if he knew the composition of the fatal drug. If he had visited Hedstone Hall in the night, and she could not doubt the stories told by Dan and Mona, what had he dropped into the night glass and why?

It was Hasketh's secret and would have to wait.

The period of grace granted her by the startling mandate was drawing to a close. Hour by hour it was passing away, the minutes seemed to fly on rapid wings. Surely the days were growing shorter.

Martin Box had turned up at the Hall, but if he had accomplished anything he did not communicate it to Lucille. He spent some time with Dan, who now and then saw a ray of light, and when he left the Hall Lucille would watch him out of sight.

The last hour finally struck. It came when night had dropped her sable curtain over the landscape and the countryside slept.

Lucille, communing with herself in the quietude of her own room, waited till the final tones of the clock had died away, and then arose and went down the stairs.

At that moment a footstep sounded on the floor of the vine-trellised veranda. She had heard that hated tread so often that recognition was instant. She grew into a statue in the dim light that prevailed, and waited for the door to open. Intuition told her who was on the other side.

The waning portal revealed the figure of Doctor Burke, but he was not alone. In the background stood the sheriff of Ashboro, and Lucille was not treating on the girl's part as she fixed her gaze upon Nicholas Burke. A leer of triumph lit up his hateful eyes. He cast a hurried look over his shoulder to see if Tonson had followed him, and then turned his gaze upon Lucille.

"Are you still obstinate, miss?" he asked. "The day of grace has expired."

He was to tell her that; she knew it.

"Does not my presence tell you that surrender is far from my thoughts?" she answered, looking him fairly in the eye.

"But the mandate, miss——"

"I disobey it."

"Do you forget the signature?"

"It is my uncle's signature," was the quick reply. "I have seen it too often to dispute it."

"Then it all lies with you. You are tonight the arbiter of your future."

"I accept the charge," came from Lucille's lips.

"You will not become my wife?"

"Never," said the mystery of Hedstone Hall is cleared."

The dark eyes underneath the betling brow lit with fire.

"Sheriff Tonson then must perform his unpleasant duty. He must dispossess you."

"Let Mr. Tonson try!"

It seemed the defiance of a lioness.

"Who is with you, Lucille?" came down the dark tunnel. "Medinha, I have heard that voice before."

Doctor Burke looked up. The beams of the lamp at the right revealed a slender figure dressed in white and above the bosom the pallid face of Mona, the blind girl, stood on the stairs. She came rapidly down the steps.

"It is the Northern serpent!" she cried, and she stood on the last step facing Burke in the hall.

"Mona," Lucille went on, "why didn't you tell all you know at the inquest? Why did you keep back the most important part of your testimony?"

The man flashed his rage at the stepless girl. She was steadying herself with one hand on the newel.

"My eyes are open now," continued Mona. "When I hear I see. When I entered the library that night and found the letter directed to Lucie I knew by your tread was that of a cat, I caught it just the same. Lie not to me, Doctor Burke. As you will one day answer for your deeds at the judgment bar of God, deny, if you dare, that you were with the master when he died."

"Pish!" hissed Burke. "I came not here to bandy words with that woman. She is even now under the ban of the law. She has been charged by a coroner's jury as a murderer's accomplice, and, as such, I can have no words with her."

A scornful smile lit Mona's face.

"Indictment is not conviction," she exclaimed. "What became of the night glass? What right had you to carry it away?"

"The right that justice gives," was the retort, "that will yet caught the real murderer it shall be produced—not before."

Mona turned to Lucille and put out her hand, which was pressed by the beauty of the Hall.

"You come to dispossess us, Nicholas Burke, for my fortunes are so interwoven with Lucille's as to be inseparable."

"Then both of you go out into the world, unless——"

"I understand—unless Lucille becomes your wife."

"That is the mandate which cannot be broken."

"Fear not, dear," said Lucille, bending gently toward the blind girl. "I have no thought of being driven from this house. Sheriff Tonson, step forward and into a hell. Doctor Burke has my ultimatum."

Mr. Tonson was getting nervous. In all his official career he had never had a similar experience. He began to look as tho he wished he had remained at home.

"The rest is for you, sheriff," said Doctor Burke. "Hedstone Hall from this moment belongs to me. I am master here, and you will act accordingly."

Tonson fumbled in his pockets and at length produced a paper which he began to open.

"What have you there, Mr. Tonson? A writ of ejectment?" quietly questioned Lucille.

"Yes, Miss Van Cleve."

"You need not read it. I accept the service."

The sheriff with a glance at Doctor Burke returned the document to his pocket.

"It is a very unpleasant duty, miss," said he. "We have been friends so many years——"

"No apologies," smiled Lucille. "I will become Doctor Burke's wife upon one condition——"

"No, no, sister!" broke in the voice of Mona, and her hand closed on Lucille's arm. "No compromise with guilt."

Impulsively Lucille shook loose the hurried grasp. She was facing Nicholas Burke again, her own features an enigma and her white hands clinched at her sides.

"I cannot quit the place which has been paradise to me," she went on. "I dare not think of such a thing. Mona shall remain with me."

"She shall, Miss Lucille," said the Northern doctor.

"Then," said Doctor Burke. Upon one condition I will become your wife."

"You have but to name it."

"The condition, or rather the agreement, must be signed. If have it here written out in full," and Lucille drew a paper from her bosom. "I think I have made all plain, and I am sure never might have altered the phraseology." Her hands were unfolding the paper while she spoke. "If you will sign, Doctor Burke. You will see that I have already signed it."

Nicholas Burke put out his hand and Lucille dropped the sheet into it. He moved toward the light. The silence seemed palpable. Mona Tonson looked relieved. Suddenly there came into Doctor Burke's eyes a look of aversion which deepened into a hate as he went down the written page. His face darkened.

"This is infamous!" he cried. "What, sign such a paper as this? You've lost your reason, girl."

A haughty smile illumined the face before him.

"Who put this into your head?" proceeded the doctor from the North.

"A little bird that came to my window last night," was the smiling answer. "When you sign that paper, Doctor Burke, Lucille Van Cleve becomes your bride."

"There is my answer!" roared Nicholas

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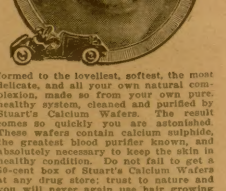

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Burke, with crimson face, and the paper, torn in two, fell at Lucille's feet.

CHAPTER XVI.

SEAFORTH'S RETURN.

WHERE did they find him?"

"Jabez South stumbled on the body in McGlennen's Cove."

"And he was dead?"

"Not dead," was the reply, "but he was near the dark valley. They say he will never be himself again."

"I did not know he had come back."

"Nor did any one, for that matter. He came back secretly and got his hurts mysteriously."

Such was the excited conversation prevalent in Ashboro the morning after Lucille's interview with Doctor Burke in the hallway of Hedstone Hall.

Haskeith Seaforth had come back! Here was a new and a dark mystery for the little Southern community. Lucille's lover had been found by a ne'er-do-well in the depths of McGlennen's Cove, not far removed from the plantation mansion. Strange, was it not, that he should be found there unconscious with a bullet wound in the head?

Lucille heard the news white-faced and stunned. It had come to her from Noah Nuff, who had flown to the Hall on the wings of the wind, and, seething with excitement and indignation, he had breathed forth his fearsome tidings.

"He must be brought here!" cried the girl, when she had pulled herself together. "There is no other place for him."

And Haskeith had been conveyed to Hedstone Hall, and in the best room in the old house was laid the wounded man, a word and apparently with the seal of everlasting silence on his lips.

The crime had set all Ashboro agog. "Not that man!" exclaimed Lucille, when the services of Doctor Dredge had been proposed. "Bring Doctor Fulton," and a servant posted off on the girl's own horse to carry out her commands.

Tremblingly she watched from the tedious examination. The room and its occupants seemed to whirl around her; she heard the beating of her heart she could not still. With clasped hands and almost breathless, she stood at the foot of the couch, gazing steadily at the poor face on the bloodstained pillows, and hearing not the few words spoken by the new surgeon.

At length the doctor rose and looked at her. A query which she could not frame into words quivered on her lips.

"There's a chance," said Doctor Fulton, in low tones. "I say, Miss Van Cleve, there's a chance. Despite the terrible wound which has pained the functions of the brain, but there's another danger."

"The fever, doctor?"

"No, the darkness of the mind."

Lucille groaned. "But Seaforth should return in this condition seemed to paralyze all her faculties. She no longer doubted his love. There was no crime on his soul, despite the testimony of Dan and Mona; to look at him was to throw to the winds the charges of Doctor Burke; to hear his sighs was to strengthen her in her determination to fight this serpent from far away.

The long hours passed without a renewal of hope.

Where was Martin Box? The thought had hardly risen ere she was answered. The door opened and the detective stood before her. Their eyes met. Martin advanced and looked at the man on the bed. Where had he been? Surely he had heard of the tragedy, and yet he had let many hours pass without coming to the Hall.

"Where have you been?" demanded Lucille. "I thought you would have come ere this."

"I knew there was no need of haste," quietly answered the detective. "I could no nothing here for him."

"But elsewhere?"

Martin nodded.

"Perhaps," he replied.

"Where is Dan?" he asked, after a moment's silence.

"Dan, strange to say, has not been seen since early today. The pain in his eyes has driven him almost frantic. At times he seems crazed. I am all nerves, Mr. Box."

"It was a cold-blooded, cowardly act," commented Martin. "I knew he was coming back, and——"

"And you did not tell me?" interrupted Lucille.

"We wanted to keep his home coming secret," was the answer. "For a while, at least."

"Well, we see what has come of it," and Lucille pointed to Seaforth.

Martin Box went away, going down the graveled walk and vanish among the trees. Half an hour later he turned up near the cove. In accordance with his wonted custom, he did his business deserted by the curious. The crowds had satiated their curiosity and gone back to town.

Martin, after carefully taking note of his surroundings, drew nearer to the spot where Jabez South had made his terrible discovery. There were no signs of a struggle. The would-be assassin had done his work like the night fiends he was. The detective plunged into the little cove, which had quite a tragic history, and began the search of it. It was a beautiful morning, and all nature smiled as the dark deed was as far from her mantle South the equator from the poles. The cove ran some distance back into the land, which was covered with a dense growth of stunted timber, which increased in wildness as the detective advanced.

All at once he heard a slight noise to the right, turning to see what it was. In an abrupt halt. A man was crawling thru the bushes toward him, a man with a haggard face and a bandage over his eyes.

"Dan!" ejaculated Martin as he bounded forward.

The creeping man heard his footsteps and halted. Martin saw that one of his brier-torn hands clutched a revolver. He eyed the man for a minute before he spoke again.

"What brought you here, Dan?" he inquired.

The hand raised the weapon, and Martin stooped and took it out of the frenzied clutch.

"'Tis I, Dan—Martin Box."

"Oh!" the man's voice was full of painful expression. "I've got to track my game now by ear."

"But where did you come to the cove?"

"Last night, it must have been, the darkness and the dying have little difference for me of late."

"What guided you to this place?"

"I don't know. I knew I was in the old cove by the lay of the land. I've known every spot of this region from boyhood. Tell me, Martin, the Hall structure, Martin. It was a prison the bars of which I longed to break. That's what brought me here for one thing. Who was shot here last night?"

"What did you hear?"

"I heard the report of a weapon. It was somewhere among the bushes. Then I heard a voice and some one cut dirt. Tell me, Martin, who was shot in the cove."

"It was Haskeith Seaforth."

"What, Dan!" he cried. And Dan gave a violent start. "Did they finish him?"

"Not quite, Dan, but, from what the doctor says, they might as well have finished the job."

"What doctor? One of the infamous pair?"

"No, Dan, Doctor Fulton from down below."

Dan seemed to take a long breath.

"Do you know where you were when you heard the shot?" queried Martin.

"I can find the place all right. Let me crawl to it, for the bushes will guide me." And Dan turned, feeling his way, and Martin crept at his heels.

It was a long, tortuous and painful crawl over the uneven ground. Not for a single moment did the detective take his eyes from the man who was imitating the movements of a serpent.

"I was right here," suddenly exclaimed Dan. "Don't you see how I broke down the bushes to make a nest for my poor body?"

"I can see that, Dan."

"And the shot came from right over there. It can't be very far, Martin."

Mr. Box walked in the direction indicated by Dan's hand.

"Seaforth was shot here," he heard Dan say, "some one must have lured him to the cove."

The detective was silent.

"Now that it's morning, I can see a bit," Dan went on. "Look well, Martin."

Martin Box was searching every foot of ground. His recumbent figure was moving hither and thither, and nothing was escaping his eagle eye. He suddenly stooped and picked up something that appeared to conceal itself in the grass. It was a little thing, and after a look at it he transferred it to one of his pockets.

"Well go back now," he said, turning to the silent Dan. "You can't stay here. Lucille is worried about you."

"Heaven bless her!" vociferated the man on the ground. "Are you thru here, Martin?"

"Yes, Dan."

The sent got upon his feet with the aid of his companion and leaned heavily on a friendly shoulder.

"I'd like to ask a question, Martin, just one. Did you find a clew?"

"Have a little patience, Dan," was the reply.

This capital story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in your subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Picked Up a Rope.

One hears some stories, tall and short, interesting and otherwise, while traveling by train.

One evening several miners entered a smoking compartment and immediately opened conversation with an elderly gentleman, who told them of a glaring miscarriage of justice in connection with a police court case in which he was greatly interested.

Then one of the miners chimed in. He said he knew a man who was sentenced to three months' hard labor for picking up a rope.

His friends ridiculed the statement, but the narrator stuck to his words.

"Perhaps he was an old hand," suggested the elderly gentleman.

"No, he wasn't," persisted the miner. "In fact, he was never in a police court before."

"What kind of a rope was it, then?"

"Usual sort—about six yards long."

Still the company was unconvinced. Then the miner took a station and the miner made toward the door. Then he turned and added significantly:

"You can imagine what happened to find out that there was a horse at the end of the rope!"

* * *

Orders Are Orders.

During the course of a trying campaign a somewhat eccentric colonel was seized with a violent attack of hygiene, and one morning he peremptorily ordered that all the men in his regiment should change their shirts. The order was duly carried out except in the case of one company, where the principal officers had been pitiably depleted by casualties. The colonel, who knew the state of affairs, rode up and said:

"Orders must be obeyed!" he said. "Let the men change shirts with one another."

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HER STRANGE CONFESSION
Or, Making Good

By Constance Beatrice Willard

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CHAPTER VI.

BRADLEY GRAVES was a member of the brokerage firm of Holden, Kerns & Graves, and he was hard put for ready money. It had been his intention to marry Rose Vandeville, and he had deceived himself into thinking that it was possible for him to win the heiress, altho truthfully Rose had never encouraged him in the slightest. Her marriage, therefore, fell like a blow upon his hopes, and to do him justice, upon his heart, for as far as lay in his power, the man loved the girl.

The morning following the reception found him sitting gloomily in his private office. He felt as tho the world had been sealed. While he sat gazing stormily at his desk blotter, a man was announced, and he had the unpleasant duty of being interviewed by a central office detective.

Bob Prouty asked few questions. He was evidently one of the members of the Knysterers Club, of which Herrick had been one, in the hope of unearthing something that would aid him in hunting down the murderer.

"No, Herrick had few friends," Graves said slowly, "and I was one of the few." Of course, none of us are Blue Ribbooners, but still, most of us felt that Herrick was a pretty square sort. I understand the house committee intended asking him for his resignation at the next meeting."

Bob Prouty whistled softly.

"I suppose it was a woman," Graves ventured.

"Yes." Bob admitted, "I think that myself; but which one?"

"Which one? Then there are some?" Graves asked hurriedly.

Bob nodded. "Men of his class always seem to attract women. And yet among all the ladies, while some are pretty compromising, I can't find any that would connect the writer with a murder. You see there was to be a dinner, and the men seems to have been pretty [illegible] signed.

"Oh, you won't see much of him now. His time will be taken up [illegible]," Graves sneered.

"Not he," Bob said firmly. "He'll work just as hard as ever, or he's been put on the city desk. Took charge yesterday."

"I wonder where he met his wife," Graves asked idly.

"At the settlement house she is interested in," Bob replied. "Nice girl, Miss Vandeville. Sorry for her, myself, too. He had to cover the work there for his paper, and once or twice took me there with him."

"Why did a girl like her marry as she did?" Graves half asked himself.

"As she did? Loved Lynn, man! If there were a few more men like Dick Kurston about, little sense we'd have. Her money is nothing as put against the man. She loves him, that's what, and don't you forget it! It's a case of real love on both sides."

"Nonsense!" Graves cried.

"It's the straight truth," Bob said a little warmly. Then the two parted, and Graves sat before his desk dreaming and his revolving pen made no record.

"Strange we should have spoken about that marriage. How the two do run together! By Jove, I wonder if there could be a connection of any sort. That mysterious murder, the hurried marriage to a practically unknown man, the leaved hole in his chair, his eyes fixed upon the ceiling, utterly unaware that he had spoken out loud, for that Tommy at the door ears were drinking in his words. He had opened the door to pay his belated visit. Tommy's duties were few and light, for he was the same as that of the doorman at the apartment building in which Herrick had had his home. Now, Tommy's crippled brother who had been made whole thru Miss Vandeville's efforts.

"Well, wouldn't dat kill 'yousse dead!" Tommy muttered to himself as he slipped out, but he kept his own counsel and gave a highly imaginative and incorrect account of his supposed interview with the man next door to his office associates upon his return, thus excusing his long absence.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN Rose left the settlement house with her husband on Tuesday night, her big car took them to the depot in short order. Richard Kurston found himself led into a reserved stateroom on board a waiting train before he had time to collect his wits.

"But, Rose," he said, when the porter had left them, "we must not run away."

"I know," she replied gently, "but we can go somewhere for a honeymoon, can't we?"

"Where is this train bound for?" he asked.

"South."

"Then we will change at Savannah, for a cross line that will take us to Valleydale, my old home. It is an ideal spot for a honeymoon."

"That will be delightful," she said softly, and for an instant Dick forgot the dread confession she had made so short a time before. Then he remembered, and also recalled the fact that he was starting off without any baggage.

As he mentioned it, the train was beginning to move, but Rose assured him that he would find nothing lacking in the baggage she had provided for him.

In the stateroom he found a large suitcase filled with every article useful in wearing apparel. A well-equipped traveling bag contained all kinds of toilet necessities. Rose had taken care of her clothing in the baggage car with her trunks.

"But will these fit?" he asked wonderingly.

"I think so. Do you remember, last week you asked some of your cast-off clothing to the settlement house? I rescued it and from it was able to get your measurements, which she has all been made from the samples I had."

"When did you have it done?" Richard asked.

"During Monday and today," his wife answered him, and he began to appreciate the magnitude of her task.

It chafed him to accept these things from her hands, this sturdy young man who had always considered it his right to be possessed, and who never asked a favor of any one, but her quivering lips and brimming eyes at the recognition of the strain she was under made him pass the matter over without further words, and she appreciated his consideration.

The trip from Savannah to Valleydale was a long one, but Rose was a charming traveling companion and was interested in the [illegible] countless objects of interest to be seen from the car window. So delightful did she make herself that Richard forgot everything for the time except that he was taking his bride, the woman he adored, back to the old home that he had cast aside professional cares. A note hastily scribbled to his chief merely mentioned that he was off on his honeymoon, and that he would return in two weeks to resume his work. Rose had told him that a telephone message, sent to the hotel as soon as they were married, had given her father the news of their union, and that he would arrive in Valleydale for or when had caused the marriage, Dick tried truly and earnestly to put it out of his mind.

It was late in the night when the Southern town was reached, and Rose, tired but charming as ever, looked about as she stepped down from the train while Dick hunted up the one hackman.

It was a lazy little place. He quickly noted by moonlight in the station glance, but there was something very delightful in its peaceful air. Red brick-paved sidewalks alternated, being lost in the shadows of the overarching elm and cedar trees. All about were flowers, although the honeysuckle and roses and ice. The old mansions, some white, others of brick, were all flanked by the double verandas, that are characteristic everywhere.

To her surprise it was a white man who drove them to the boarding-place Dick had selected. He explained:

"The hotel is unspeakable, dearest, but this place is about as good as can be found. Mrs. Belle Herridge, Miss Nellie, as we call her, is the best cook in this part of the State."

Rose smiled. Her ears rejoiced in the drawl which had crept into the casually brisk tones of her husband. The home atmosphere was beginning to make itself felt, and as the days passed she was delighted to see how entirely all the city sophistication faded away, leaving the perfect Southern gentleman.

It seemed to the New Yorker that every one in the little place called to see her, and they would have been surfeited with invitations if Dick had not made his bride's welfare his first care and kept her quiet. He also delighted her to see that it was not as the daughter of the trust magnate that she was honored, but as Richard Kurston's wife. She found that her maiden name awakened no enthusiasm among these quiet, hospitable people, and it was a new sensation for her and one that she enjoyed. No one placed a higher estimate upon Richard Kurston than his wife, and she loved to see him appreciated.

She had not been in Valleydale twenty-four hours before she learned that the hope of her husband's heart was some time to regain possession of the old Kurston mansion, which was a little out of town. Immediately upon learning this she wrote to her father asking a favor she knew would be granted, and so rapidly did the magnate respond that the day before they left, Rose asked her husband to go out with her to his old homestead and take her over it.

"I can let you see the outside, but, darling, some Northerner bought it years ago, and it has stood empty ever since. I believe he got it very cheap when the mortgage expired, and he has the land farmed."

Rose smiled and pressed something into his hand. Kurston started. It was the massive key he knew of old, the one he had tried to turn in his babyhood and had seen lock himself and his widowed mother from their home two years before her death.

"Rose, what does this mean?" he asked, a little brokenly.

Rose turned and took from her traveling bag, in which she had locked them, the papers which had conveyed the home to her, saying simply:

"My father's wedding present to me." After a moment Richard kneeled with himself. It was hard when he loved her so much and wanted to do everything for his wife, that she should be surrounded with every luxury. Rose understood him perfectly and laying her hand on his arm, she said in her low, sweet tones that had always charmed him:

"Dick, dear, let's understand each other right now. I have no use for a very rich woman. I have a fortune of my own, and am my father's only child and he loves me very much. What he has already done for me he will never forget. If I had gone to South America he would have had to lose me for a time. As it is, as we are not going away, but will live in New York, you will have to make another sacrifice, dear. You must live in city and away from my father. Can you give up your dreams of a home of our own for my sake?"

Richard looked into his wife's dark eyes and read there such perfect love and trust that his brain reeled. He understood perfectly. He had balked terribly at the thought of living on his father-in-law, but in agreeing to her proposition, so, shouldering the burden, for burden it was to be obliged to stand the imputation of having married a woman for her father to take care of him, he kissed his wife and said brokenly:

"You know, dear, one of my highest hopes is to please and protect you," and neither spoke further for moments, their feelings being too sacred for speech. Then it was he who broke the silence to say gently:

"It was a beautiful idea of yours to buy back the old home, and we'll go right out and look it over" soon afterward they were driving out to the Kurston mansion.

They drove up the long lane from the road, then tied the horses, and arm in arm strolled up the brick walk to the

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A recipe given by a famous physician for long life was: "Keep the kidneys in good order! Try to eliminate thru the skin and intestines the poisons that otherwise clog the kidneys. Avoid eating meat as much as possible; avoid too much salt, alcohol, tea. Try a milk and vegetable diet. Drink plenty of water, and exercise so you sweat—the skin helps to eliminate the toxic poisons and uric acid."

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house. This walk was moss-covered and bordered with box, and Dick stopped Rose to tell her how his mother had loved the box, and how its odor recalled the gentle little lady, broken and worn by the loss of everything her heart held dear.

"Oh, how proud I am we can keep this home!" Rose cried, her eyes sparkling, her face flushed. "Think, Dick, how wonderful it will be to have it and to pass it on to our children."

Even as she spoke, Rose felt her husband's arm stiffen, but she was unprepared for what followed, for Richard, his face pale, said huskily:

"We can't have any children, Rose. We don't dare. Think what it would mean to them if the blow did fall! Of course, I know we could get you off. There is where your father's money would come in so good, but think of the stain upon the innocent little ones! No, my wife, you and I must go childless thru the world, but we will be all the more to each other to make up," and he drew her closer to him, but Rose only looked at him wanly, then whispered:

"Oh, Dick, you are cruel! You cannot forgive!"

"Yes, yes, I do!" he cried passionately. "God! don't for an instant think I don't understand. I have figured it all out. Don't cry, darling," and his voice was wonderfully tender.

"I'm not crying." Rose returned in a low voice.

"I can understand it all. That wretch was stealing your father. You went there, thinking in your dear, impulsive way that you could brave the matter out."

"Don't, Dick!" she whispered.

"Yes, let's have it done with, dearest. I want you to understand that I know just what happened. You went there to see the man who wronged your father. He, with that vanity he possessed in a very strong degree, imagined that you came to see him because you adored him. Then he made love, disagreeable."

They were moving slowly toward the front door, Rose hanging very heavily on her husband's arm.

"At last you could not help but understand him, and to defend your honor you snatched up the dagger paper knife, lying on the table, and struck him. I am right, am I not, sweetheart?" and he bent tenderly over her.

They had reached the bottom of the steps. To the right an early flowering bush shook its tiny yellow petals to the breeze, giving forth a heavy perfume which was ever afterward associated in Rose Livingstone's mind with the anguish she was then enduring. Her emotions, and perhaps the heaviness of the perfume, caused her to waver, and her husband asked her his last question, she looked up at him and murmured:

"Oh! Dick, Dick, how wicked I am!" And then for the first time in her healthy young life, fell fainting into his arms.

CHAPTER VIII.

LOLA LIVINGSTONE was receiving a number of her friends, or those whom she called by that name. Perhaps if a snapshot of the minds of all of them could have been taken, the composite picture would not have represented much friendship, but Mrs. Livingstone was not a woman who went in for deep feeling from women. She was content to have them present, and enjoyed watching them squirm as she administered small doses of poisoned sweetness in the way of seemingly innocent remarks to their armor. No one knew better than she the exact status of each of them. She suspected the presence of family skeletons, and could give the dates with reasonable correctness of future divorces. Having been so pre-eminently in the public eye herself, she was not content until she had turned the spotlight upon all with whom she came into contact.

Grace was there, pretty Grace, a useless little butterfly, and yet capable of something of consequence if roused. She wore a charming costume of blue broadcloth, trimmed with sable, with a toque of the fur, lightened with a touch of gold braid. Her sable muff and stole were all too costly for the daughter of her father, and yet Grace was always well dressed. She had turned thousands of dollars into the coffers of the company who furnished her with her clothes with the understanding that she would advertise them. Her dainty figure and pretty little face made her an excellent lay figure for their wares. The majority of her friends knew nothing of this arrangement, but Mrs. Livingstone knew, and as Grace stood beside her that afternoon, she purred:

"How much would an outfit like yours cost, in maroon, say, trimmed with ermine?"

"Cost?" Grace asked, elevating her eyebrows. "Dear me, Lola, I can't even tell how much this cost. I know nothing about figures."

Mrs. Livingstone laughed, and there was a tinge of a sneer in the sound.

"No?" she queried. "I don't suppose you do know what it did cost. Say, Grace, how long do you think you can outlive?"

Grace's little face flushed, but she said with dignity: "I really fail to understand."

"Oh, come off, my dear. Don't try to blind me. You make a pretty good model, but why waste your charms on men with money and do away with being a costumer's show window?"

"You are rude," the girl said slowly.

"There are plenty of awfully rich fellows who would jump at the chance of marrying a girl with your social position."

"If I were willing." Grace said significantly.

"Well, you are, aren't you? If not, why do you work so hard to keep up appearances? Come, come, all of everything's adored." Grace cried enthusiastically.

How long do you suppose society would tolerate me if I weren't so rich as I am? I'd soon be thrown on the back door." And again she laughed unpleasantly.

"I used to think that way, but since Rose married, I don't know, she seems so happy."

Mrs. Livingstone laughed, and her eyes glinted a little.

"Poor Rose!" she sighed.

"Poor Rose?" Indeed not! Happy, rich Rose—she's the envy of the world, she adores!" Grace cried enthusiastically.

"Never believe it," was the prompt reply. "Rose is a fool. I heard that reporter to cover her chagrin at being jilted by Lord Abarthanal."

"By him?" Grace cried. She remembered that the preceding summer the young Englishman had been Rose's constant shadow, and then he had left suddenly for Europe.

"Why, of course. She threw herself at his head, and then—oh, well, even her money didn't buy him," and Mrs. Livingstone emitted a harsh, hasty expression.

"Good-by!" Grace cried, jumping up, her face flushed, her eyes brimming with tears. "I wish you'd let me be good, Lola. Every time I see you my own self-esteem is given a new lease of life. Don't have any too good an opinion of myself ordinarily, but you show me how nice I really am," and with that Grace flounced out of the house and down the steps, nearly knocking Frank Young off his feet.

"Hello!" that young man cried, reaching out his hand to check her progress.

"The Livingstone house is a new way to speed the parting guest, eh?"

Grace grinned; then, tucking her hand into his arm, she gave the young man an impatient tug.

"Come on away—don't go in. She's too horrid to-day, Gregson. If you venture you'll get ripped up, too. Take me."

"Probably your facts are more correct than your grammar, but never mind, you mean all right. Don't you?" he said, turning willingly. "But where do you want me to go?"

"Did you ever find out to the end of the street car line?" Grace asked.

"Not yet." Young replied, smiling down on her confidingly.

"Neither have I, and I've always wanted to. They ought to be pretty empty this time of day. Let's go there, at least, and we can have a good talk."

"All right." Young agreed, as they turned their steps in the direction of the nearest line. "At any rate, it has the merit of being a very cheap pleasure."

"Don't talk about cheapness," Grace snapped.

"Poor folks have to," he returned cheerfully.

They found an empty car and settled down, but for several blocks neither said anything. For the first time in their long acquaintance both seemed a little embarrassed. At last Grace broke the silence by saying softly:

"I hate Lola Livingstone!"

"Most people do, but what's your special reason for doing so?"

"Say, Frank, do you know how I get my clothes?" Grace asked with a burning face.

The young man nodded. "I expect so," he returned.

"Well, how do I?"

"You are a model for some costuming company, aren't you?" he asked.

Grace nodded. "Do I look it, yess?"

"Easy. There were but two ways, and I knew you well enough to put the one way out of the question, so there was only this other."

"Is that the conclusion every one has?" the girl asked falteringly.

"Well, look at it sensibly," he said, apologetically. "Your father isn't wealthy, and you do dress stunningly," and he smiled encouragingly at her.

"But I thought no one would know," she said, with a sob.

"Oh, come here, don't fret about it! Perhaps I see things clearer than most. I suppose that old cat has been slanging you, but don't mind her. No one cares what she says," and he looked as tho he longed to wipe away the tears which were rolling down over Grace's little nose.

"Then she began to run down Rose," Grace continued, trying to wink away her tears.

"Who? Lola?"

Grace nodded.

"Rose can pretty well take care of herself, and if she can't, that athletic husband of hers can."

"Lola says Rose married him for spite because Lord Abarthanal jilted her."

"What?"

"He jilted her."

"Well, I say, this is too much!" Young cried. "Say, Grace, that young nobleman is breaking his heart over Rose Vandeville. He came over here after a heiress, but lost his heart to Rose, and wouldn't hear of any other candidates we trotted out for him."

"Who trotted out for him?" Grace cried, her eyes widening with astonishment.

Young's face flushed painfully, he stammered for a moment, then he said confusedly:

"I tell you, Gracie, you aren't the only one who has to do other things to make ends meet."

"Tell me what you mean," she pleaded. The conductor, watching them idly, wondered what they were quarreling about.

"Well, you see, I'm one of the representatives of a syndicate. Impecunious noblemen are sent over here by members of the syndicate in Europe. We find heiresses for them. A certain per cent of the marriage settlement goes to the syndicate. Sometimes it takes some of the bridegrooms stand out so hard for a big lump sum, see?"

"And you are connected with such a thing?" Grace wailed.

"Grace, how do you get your clothes? Do you suppose I can buy my glad rags, keep up my clubs, feed myself, and go the pace I am on my law practice? We all have to do something, and we are only a few women rich like Rose, or fellows lucky enough to marry so much money as that girl over there, who is very scramble."

"You wanted to marry Rose yourself?" Grace asked.

"No, fortify, I didn't, Grace. If I could have had the money without the girl I'd have signed my life sentence any day, tho."

"You can't make me believe you didn't like Rose," Grace said decidedly.

"Don't care a tad. I did and do like Rose, awfully, and admire her a whole heap, but, gracious, I am afraid of her! She is too much for me, and I'm not sure that must be a spice of the devil in the woman

(Continued on Page 19.)

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SWEETNESS IN BULK.

Fat girls are quite as nice, I know,
As any going,
They are a trifle heavy, tho,
To take out rowing.

That's So.

"I hear strange sounds in my ears, doctor."

"Well, where would you expect to hear them?"

His Portion.

Bacon—"They say in some countries they eat grubs."

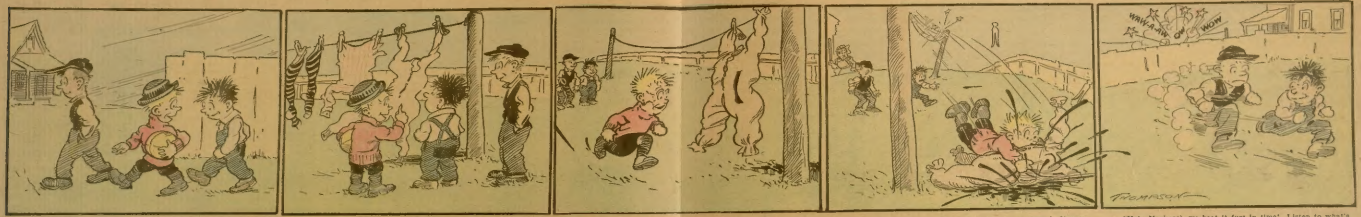
Egbert—"Great guns! Think of getting the neck!"

Came Not Cure.

Wayward Son—"But dad, you should make allowance for the follies of youth."

Father—"Sigh! If it wasn't for the allowance you get there'd be less follies."

THEN STUB GOT HIS



Stub Jones—"Come on, fellers, we can have a lot of fun with this new football over in my yard, but we ought to have a dummy to practice tacklin' with.

"Here's de very thing! We will stuff de other union suit an' tackle it to a fare-ye-well!"

The Bunch—"See him go! Stub hit it a rib-cracker! Atta boy!

That's right, tackle low, Stub, an' clothes lines

"He's certain got the makin' of a hot football player! Jiggers, Stub, here comes yer maw!

"Moty Mackerel, we beat it fust in time! Listen to what's happenin' ter Stub! He won't be able to set down for a week!"

Accounted For.

Patience—"I hear Will has been hurt again in his car."

Patrice—"Yes, he has."

"That's about his sixth accident, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"The idea! Where did he get that chauffeur of his?"

"His doctor recommended him."

"Stewed—I must buy an outing cap for my fishing trip!"

Wife—"Get it plenty large, dear—in case you catch a fish!"

Natural Inference.

"Here comes Mrs. Gay's husband last as the last horn blows, as usual!"

"Her husband! Why, you told me that pretty little woman was a widow."

"Oh, no, I didn't. I told you she was the wife of the late Mr. Gay."

Conscientious Bill.

"Bill had charge of the animal tent," said the old circus man, "and among his pets was a leopard, the only one we had with the show, and quite enough, too. This leopard gave Bill more trouble than all the rest of the menagerie put together. It was certainly an ugly brute.

"Well, one day, when we were resting downstairs, I had come up to town to arrange about some advance business. I was eating my dinner in the hotel when a telegram was handed to me. It was from Bill, and read: 'The leopard has escaped. Prowling about town. What shall I do?'

"That was just like Bill. He had to have explicit directions, even in an emergency like this. He didn't want to make a mistake.

"Somehow, Bill wired back to Bill, should have used his head, didn't think about it until a couple of hours later, when I received another telegram from conscientious, careful Bill, asking, 'Which spot?'"

A Quick Response.

"Speaking of the Mikado spirit, it is much in evidence in a 'dry' town," remarked a traveler.

"You surprise me."

"Yes. On one occasion while visiting a town of that sort I requested the loan of a corkscrew. Nine prominent citizens who were lounging in the hotel lobby at the time hastened to oblige me, and every blessed one of them asked me as a personal favor to let him draw the cork."

Marked Improvement.

"What happened to Professor Dull?"

"I thought nothing could improve

SEASONAL WISHES.

Oh, I would be a summer,
If I could have my wish;
In cold sea caves
Beneath the waves
I'd frolic with the fish.

And with some one we'd be sailin'
I'd sit upon the strand
And gaze and gaze,
And hold her fishiks hand.

We'd face the storms together,
And I'd protect her vurges,
And haste the time
When she'd sit and spoon.

On Greenland's icy verge,
The green zone of old ocean
With her I should prefurge,
And such things
Upon the dread sea floor.

While some one says how
Those thoughts are poetical, very,
Why, she's my wife
Alone in Feburary.

Of the Same Class.

"They are separated by the minister boarder. 'That the woman who heals?' he asked.

"Lord, it not the proper word for it," growled the fussy old bachelor at the pedal extremity of the table. "She's extinct."

Couldn't Follow Directions.

"Not long ago I gave an freshman a box of pills and cautioned him carefully with regard to adhering to the instructions on the box cover. These instructions read, 'Take one pill three times a day.'

"Next day the man came in and placed the pills on my desk and when I asked him what was the matter he said:

"'I couldn't carry out the instructions.'

"'What's the reason?' I asked.

"'I took the first pill all right,' was his reply, 'but I couldn't get it to take it the other two times.'"

Disgusted Dad.

"I dunno how that boy of mine got thru college," said Dad.

"Didn't he learn anything?"

"Why, he can't even read the Latin on his own diploma."

Just Couldn't Miss It.

"What's the population of this town?" asked the supercilious stranger.

"Oh, about 600," answered the native.

"Have you an active citizen-ship?"

"Yes, sir. The last time we had a change of administration I was appointed one of the men who had been hoodwinked for months got up to take a hand—to do pro-secuting."

His Complaint.

It had been a very tiring case for everybody concerned. The plaintiff and the defendant were both countrymen and had had to have everything explained to them at least twice.

"Do I understand, my man," said the magistrate at one point, "that the defendant buried invectives at you?"

The plaintiff scratched his head wildly. Then slowly a look of understanding dawned in his eyes as he replied:

"No, sir. To tell the truth, it was only turnips as he threw at me, but wot I complain about was the terrible way he swore at me when they missed!"

What's the Use?

He—"Do you think I ought to see your husband about my marrying your daughter?"

She—"Dear me, no. He will read all about it in the papers."—Puck.

SURVEILLANCE.

I always keep
My clothing neat,
I ponder deep
On what I eat,
I wash my face
With thoughtful frown;
I'm circumspect
When I'm in town.

I do not flirt
With strangers, no!
I mingle not
With folks I know.
Caution is safest,
So I've noted;
For myself, adieu!
So I'm bolted.

Who all the care,
Who all the fuss?
Why, I'm a germ
In mortal dread
As that past 'germ'
It never dreamed

The Deservedest Race.

Paddy (after holding forth at considerable length on the wrongs of Ireland—"A-h! Faith, and it's liberty and freedom we're wantin', sorr!

Uncle—"Liberty, is it? What sort of liberty do you suppose any Irishman ever had or will have?"

Paddy (after profound thought)—"Liberty—to—begorrah—liberty to shpit in the trains!"

Uncle—"You are my heir, Jack! And I haven't long to live!"

Nephew—"Oh, uncle, don't talk of dying! At least until my debts are outlawed!"

One Was Enough.

The minister was shaking hands with a new member of his congregation, a girl fresh from Sweden, and said, cordially: "I would like to know your address, as I can call on you."

"Oh," said the girl, innocently, "I haf a man."

Oh, Did It?

Patience—"What did you think of Bob's mustache?"

Patrice—"Oh, it tickled me immensely."

Reverses.

"That rich girl was just looking for a husband when I turned up."

"What happened?"

"Nothing. She turned me down."

A Real Urchina.

"There is no uplift about this establishment."

"Yes, there is. It has both freight and passenger elevators."

The Medical Way.

A medical student who prided himself on being a humorist was running down the steps of a hospital when he met a fellow student.

"Hello, Brown," cried the latter, noticing that his friend looked pleased, "You're in a hurry. What's the matter—any good news?"

"I should think so!" replied Brown. "We've got a woman in the ward upstairs who is so cross-eyed that the tears run down her back."

"Bless me!" said his friend. "You can't do anything with her, can you?"

"I should think we can—in fact, we have," cried Brown. "We've treated her for bacteria."

Simpler Process.

"No doubt you enjoy having your son at home during his vacation."

"Oh, yes," replied Mr. Grabsum. "And he's less trouble to me while at home."

"How is that?"

"When he's at college he's always telegraphing me for money. Now I can save time and telegraph tolls by handing it to him each morning at the breakfast table."

An Obtrusive Garment.

Miss Dumbbell—"Look at the arrow-and-white-striped sweater the blonde in the next compartment is wearing!"

Mr. Pruffles—"Anything as loud as that is distracting and should be suppressed under the head of unnecessary noises."—Judge.

Her Shifting Form.

"A young man is formed at 25."

"A young lady, too. But she has to alter the superstructure frequently to meet fashion's requirements."

True.

"My boy, remember this."

"What, dad?"

"There's a big difference between being level-headed and flat-headed."

A Mistake Corrected.

"I hear your newly married daughter and her husband are going to live with you."

"That's a mistake."

"A mistake? I heard it from good authority."

"A mistake, all the same. They are not going to live with me—they are going to live on me."

Police Captain—"Rooney, you're getting too fat. Every examination that's due as you for six months has rolled you off."

Maybe They Are.

"Why do those judges wear those things?"

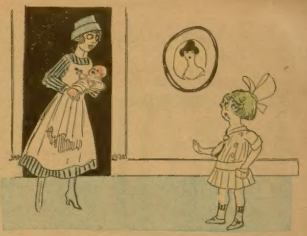
"Those are their robes. They seem to impress you."

"Yes, I was just thinking they must be unhandy when a man wants to reach for his grip of judgment."

Rhetorical Measurement.

"Brevity is the soul of wit."

"Yes," replied Senator Sorghum. "But you can't get enough soul into enough wit to allow persons to talk long enough to give them time to sit still and get rested up."



Nurse—"Has the new baby that the doctor left?"

Small Girl—"I hope he's been fumigated! Dr. Brown visits so many diseased people!"

Dude (on deer hunting trip)—"Now be careful and don't shoot me for a deer, ye know!"

Guide—"Don't you worry, young feller! Your head wouldn't be worth mistaking!"

"Jack tells me that football isn't as brutal as many believe."

"The games I've seen haven't been half as bloodcurdling as the college yells."

Stricken.

[illegible] I [illegible] to my [illegible] dismay, I saw [illegible] the patient's heart [illegible] expletive [illegible] head instead of [illegible] you went to sleep and the result is the back of his head stuck to the bed."

"Madam" he said gravely "you are the [illegible] "Me!" ejaculated Mrs. Wheats. "I [illegible] shamblesses. I [illegible] Yes, I should say, you!" You stick to [illegible]

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A Good Excuse
Feminine Finance
Still Sore
A Vast Difference
Cruel Delight
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His Occupation Going
Those in His Class
Poor Hubby
Pictorial
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Personally Considerate
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Rather Effeminate
Did Her Best
An Extremist
Conflicting Emotions
An Untimely Suggestion
Her Party
Perfect Jewel
Her Wedding Day
The Doctor's Desire
Same Thing
A Prospective Crop
Eskimo Version
Racing
Approved
Immune
The Return
A Sensitive Spirit
Domestic Politics
Where It Hit
A Test Case
Gods and Man
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A Sure Sign
Cheerful One
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DOWN WITH HIS SHIP

Or, The White Creeper

By William H. Manning

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CHAPTER XV.

AS THE men moved away a quiet voice rose behind the captain, and caused him to turn quickly.

"May I speak with you, sir?"

It was Porgera who questioned, and the captain promptly replied in the affirmative, anxiously, yet hopefully.

"You had better come below," the woman went on. "Something wonderful has happened. The young lady, she now awake, and she have her mind back. I have talk with her, and she knows who is master of this ship, and she says you must be her granddaddy. Yes, and she say her name is Persis Hardy."

"Her mind has come back?" cried Hardy. "Fully back?"

"Her head now as clear as the sea under the sun, sir. No more muddle, not a bit. You come and see."

The captain started. Roger would have stayed, but the older man bade him follow. They went together, and they found the girl in the cabin. First view showed the same brim, refined young woman they had become accustomed to see, but a new expression was in her face. That expression was far brighter, far more intelligent than before, and her manner was full of eagerness.

She took a steadfast look at Hardy and then ran forward and flung herself into his arms.

"Granddaddy!" she cried happily. "I knew it must be you when I heard your name, just now. Oh! I am so glad, so glad!"

"Dear child, dear child!" the captain murmured brokenly.

He made no demand for proof, and did not feel that any was necessary, for the visible evidence that she was again in her right mind was convincing. He folded his arms around her and thanked the Providence that had sent her to him in her time of distress.

Roger walked to the extremity of the room and stood with averted face until their murmurings gave place to clear words from the captain.

"This way, Roger! My dear girl wants to tell her story now. But, Persis, be very brief for this occasion. Give us the outline only, and let details wait. Now we are ready."

She had resumed her seat at the table, sitting there, she shivered and hesitated Her grandfather was tempted to counsel further delay, dreading to have the past brought back clearly, but she began at once.

"I will, as you suggest, give only the outline now. Perhaps I shall never want to tell more than that, for it is dreadful. I will be very brief."

"Yes, my child."

"I sailed for San Francisco in the ship Dawn of Day. Father and mother remained with me as long as possible, but went ashore just before we cast off, and when the ship sailed I was the only Hardy aboard. I had an elderly woman for a companion, but that you would naturally expect.

"Halfway in our voyage trouble broke out in the ship. It seems the food for the crew was not good, and, being mostly ignorant men of foreign blood, they mutinied. Then the vessel somehow got on fire, and—oh, the terror, the scurrying to and fro, the commands of the officers that were not obeyed, and the violence of the mutineers!

"My endurance gave way, I fainted, and I know nothing more as to what occurred.

"When consciousness returned I was in a little boat, alone on the sea. No ship was in sight. The sun was as sharply as I might and did, not the least sign is sail was to be made out. Alone on the great, terrible ocean—alone, alone! Think what that meant! I was filled with horror, and was tempted to fling myself into the water to end it all.

"How I came to be here I don't know. I had a little food, and spare clothing that had been tossed in carelessly, as if there had been some intention of setting sent adrift, but I cannot explain it. All that day I was in terror, but when night fell I was filled with blind, agonizing horror. Alone on the sea in that bit of a boat, and night around me. I lost all control of myself. I remember that I shrieked aloud, and then—a blank!"

She burst into sobbing sobs that went to her grandfather's heart, and he went to her and soothed her with words and caresses.

When she grew calmer her case was briefly but carefully considered. She had been in a state of insanity from the moment when consciousness left her until the morning of the present day. Her reason returned with the Shooting Lights and her delirium ceased with what she deemed that period, a blank.

When the subject was dropped for the time, both Hardy and Roger took pains to lighten her mind, and it responded well to the cheerful every lighted. Reason was recovered, not for a brief time only, but permanently Time and quiet will bring back the frightful adventure had temporarily taken from the waif of the sea.

The Dawn of Day in San Francisco was made without difficulty. No lowlying gray schooner was ever sighted, and no adventure of other kind disturbed the peace. Persis resolutely put all worries behind her and, ably aided by her grandfather, found enjoyment in the events of the passing days. It was a sane, happy young woman Captain Hardy brought into the harbor on the Coast.

Events moved rapidly after the arrival. Wallace Brothers duly notified, started the campaign that eventually stripped Cyrus Brayden of his unlawful gains, but the White Creeper avoided the warship sent to hunt for him and continued her depredations until, six months later, she was lost in a gale and all hands were lost on the bottom of the ocean.

Captain Mosco and his companion Malays each received a modest premium and returned home well content. The former cook of the pirates was not only forgiven but employed to help sail anew. Less favor was to be shown to Lem Soper, but he slipped away and was lost to sight. The ship Dawn of Day was never reported, and no survivor except Persis was ever found.

Hardy had a long, friendly interview with Wallace Brothers, telling them how he had deserted the Brave while under the influence of liquor, and that while it was so satisfactory that when he left their office his step was proud and his head unusually erect.

Long before these events were ended there was an interesting happening elsewhere in the city. In a modest area near the water-front was a dingy old store with a sign that announced it a ship-chandler's place of business. In this place, late in the day when the brigantine fetched to her home port, a stumpy man sat at a desk figuring with a stubby pencil, but his concentration was suddenly interrupted.

"Ahoy, Captain Josh!"

The chandler started violently as deep voice sent the words to his hearing, swung about and started.

"Bless my soul!" he gasped

"How does she head, mate?"

"Captain Joe!"

"Nobody else," agreed the newcomer, heartily. "I just dropped in to keep that engagement with you."

"Then you didn't really—er!—really go down—"

"Go down with my ship? No, Captain Josh, my ship came up to me. Did you think I was a ghost? Have I knocked all the chocks out from under you?"

The chandler pushed his chair violently back, hastened across the floor with his usual hasty limp, seized the other captain's hand, and shook with mighty power.

"Captain Joe, by Neptune! Bless my soul!"

Hardy told the whole story in the minutes that followed, his old friend sitting spellbound, interjecting exclamation now and then, but often absolutely speechless. The dangers and romance of the sea he knew to be endless, but this tale was unique even to him.

"All over with now," Captain Joe would say. "Wallace Brothers have offered me another ship, to show their feelings toward me, but I'm too old a man for command. I shall stay ashore—with Persis! Heart of man, Captain Josh, it will do you good to meet that girl. Loving honey, she is. Say, lookee here, mate, that girl, unless I mistake the signs, is bound to desert the name of Hardy. She and Roger are friendly—oh! that's the term for it. So be it! Roger is a mighty fine chap, and I'll be glad if they do splice up."

The speaker winked and tapped a finger on Captain Josh's knee

"Yes, mate," he added, "and I'm also glad I never went to sea with my ship!"

The End.

Judge Was in Error.

Mose Ham was arrested for "loud and uproarious language," and "disturbing the peace." Judge Briles read the document in the case and then turned to the black-skinned prisoner.

"Mose Ham," said he, "you are charged with shouting, groaning, crying aloud in the streets, demonstrations, profane language, cursing, swearing, breaking the peace, and general noisy conduct not becoming—"

"Yes dis, Jedge. Dey ain't no use o' dat de trut. All I had was er slight visitation ob religion. Er I talked loud Jedge, kaze I'm deaf in one ear an' deaf in de t'ud dan mos' folks."

A Fearless Man.

"We've come," said the chairman of a political committee, "to nominate a man for city, "to ask you to take this nomination. The city needs a man like you—strong, honest, owning no master, fearing no man."

The great man was visibly touched. "I'll not deny," he said, "that your kind words have shaken my resolution. I trust that, if elected, I may justify your confidence. I will prove, I hope, an honest, strong, brave, self-reliant; that I own no master and fear no man. Suppose you wait a minute till I see if my wife will let me accept?"

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Essay on Pants.

Pants are of two kinds; human and dog.

The human pants of commerce are worn mainly by males.

But equal rights prevail among dogs. Human pants are worn thicker in winter and thinner in summer.

A dog's pants come thicker in the summer.

The dog's lunks are the seat of his pants. (Date 1875, Hostetter's Almanac.)

White pants are not a garment. They are a business to themselves.

The man who wears them doesn't do anything else.

When I was small and on a farm, I wore pants that were not new.

When they had been first worn out, by the first tailless ancestor I had, they had been patched at all the ventilated places.

When the original goods wore out between the patches, the first patches were connected by other patches.

And now on.

Where they overlapped—the patches—the goods became shabby and thin.

And when human legs made of any material less durable than vulcanized rubber wore through, which was about quarter Deer Island Jeans trousers patched with every kind of heavy goods from horse blankets to remnants of rag carpet—when I say, any human nether limbs are incarcerated in these heedless tubular garments in a wheat field on a southwest hillside at 2 o'clock on a clear, still day, when the temperature is 110 in the shade and there is no shade, the owner of said legs thinks longingly of the bastile, the stocks, the pincers, the guillotine, the pillory, the thumb-screw, the rack, the stake and other religious pleasantries.

I have gone long days in the wheat field in a pair of such asbestos pants lined with sandpaper or barbed wire, and now death or public speaking or fashionable society—none of those things has any terror for me.

I playfully inquire of death as to the location of its finger.

Classified Want Ads

Classified Want Ad Information

The rate for one insertion in Chicago Ledger and one insertion in The Saturday Blade is 3c cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size of ad or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500 N. Dearborn St. CHICAGO, ILL.

AGENTS WANTED

EVERY HOME, ON FARM, IN SMALL TOWN or city needs Sunshine Lamp. It's wonderful. Burns common (coal-oil) Makes 300 candle power light. Tested and brought highest award and recommended by Government and 24 leading Universities. Agents sold 40 lamps. One farmer cleared over $500 in 6 weeks. Write for terms. Mr. Coggin, Kansas, sold 1,000 lamps. Mr. Coggin says: "Sold 1,000 lamps in 30 days; can't supply demand." Write quick for sample lamp for free trial, distributing proposition and secure territory. Write exclusive territory. Mantle Lamp Co., 607 Aladdin Bldg., Chicago.

MEN AND WOMEN WANTED EVERYwhere to distribute free circulars and collect names; permanent; whole or part time; $3 per day salary and expenses. Money advanced for expenses. Manufacturer's line of pleased and satisfied customers. Position permanent. Write to address H. A. Hutton, Dept. M, Tacoma, Wash.

LIVE AGENTS—ON NEWEST ELECTRIC Chronometer clocks, necessary as 'phone; every home, office and business wants; astounded correct and durable; to high-powers with capital (not electric); advantage; a lifetime opportunity; circulars. Transo Company, Rockford, Illinois.

AGENTS—A ONE CENT POST CARD WILL put you in touch with an $80 a week proposition. Exclusive territory. Special Agent to the consumer. Don't let one get between you and your profits. Write Div. M. P. American Aluminum Mfg. Co., Lemont, Ill.

WE START YOU IN BUSINESS, FURNISHing everything; men and women, learn to Mail Order Business. Our System to buy, sell or exchange goods or services, Copyrighted Plans. Co-Operative Exchange Co., East Orange, N. J.

AGENTS—SELL RICH-LOOKING IMPORTED [illegible] Quick Sellers. Cleans Teeth and Gold [illegible] Sells [illegible] 116 in a day. You can do same. Write [illegible] Sample Case Offer. Universal Importing Co., [illegible] Dept. 1, 1133 Broadway, New York.

MINTON'S IRON, RUST, MILDEW AND INK [illegible] stains like magic. Retail package [illegible] Outfit. Minton Chemical Co., 702 Dallas Avenue, Pittsburgh.

MEN AND WOMEN—$1,500 to $4,000 YEAR-ly taking orders for over 90 Household Articles. Sent Free. Big Change. Full particulars. Duo Factories, Dept. [illegible] Chicago.

[illegible] MAIL ORDER BUSIness; we have [illegible] for sale; will sell $20.00 daily guaranteed. Send 25c for sample and full particulars. Address Dept. N. J.

AGENTS—800% PROFIT; GOLD AND SILver sign letters for store and office windows. Any one can put on. Write today for free sample and full particulars. 415 N. Clark, Chicago.

AGENTS: HIGHLY PROFITABLE RETURNS [illegible] Goods. Handy Toilet Article. Every [illegible] Agent. Write at once. National Importing & Mfg. Co., Dept. 2, 1133 Broadway, New York.

YOUNG MAN, WOULD YOU ACCEPT A [illegible] just for showing it to your friends? Learn full particulars. Address Dept. 415, Chicago, and get beautiful souvenir article and a wonderful offer.

LADIES SENSATION! 11-PIECE TOILET ARticle set selling like blazes at $1, with $1 evening set free! Whirlwind seller. Write at once. Write M. Pierce Co., [illegible]

PORTRAIT AGENTS SEND FOR OUR [illegible] Portraits at 35c. Agents [illegible] Address Redmond Mfg. Co., Box 159, Martinsburg, Mo.

LARGE MANUFACTURER WANTS REPREsentative in every locality to introduce well known article; wearers, skirts, direct to home. Write for free sample and particulars. Address Gray, New York City.

$1,500 PER YEAR LOOKS GOOD TO MOST men and women. How about you? If you are interested, write for particulars. National Supply Co., 1133 Broadway, New York City.

AGENTS—SELL RELIABLE CUSTOM MADE [illegible] Big commission. Complete line free. Temple Raincoat Co., Box [illegible] Chicago.

AGENTS—I'VE A NEW SOAP GAME that's a dandy. New stuff; 100% profit. Sample and terms free. Write Quick. Lacassian Co., Dept. 21, St. Louis, Mo.

LIVE DEALER WANTED IN EVERY TERRItory to sell our talking machines and records. Write for information. Metropolitan Co., Dept. 35, 111 Second Avenue, New York.

GUARANTEED CUSTOM RAINCOATS, BIGgest commissions paid. Lowest selling prices. Big free offers. Guaranteed Raincoat Co., Clark B. Benton, Manager, Dept. [illegible] Cincinnati, Ohio.

BEST SELLER—CINCINNATI, OHIO. Greatest dry goods bargains on earth. Agents and storekeepers write quick.

HELP WANTED

MEN, WOMEN WANTED EVERYWHERE. U. S. Government Jobs. $75.00 to $150.00 month. Vacations. Common education sufficient. Write immediately for free list of positions now obtainable. Franklin Institute, Dept. L. O 16, Rochester, N. Y.

BECOME DETECTIVES—EARN BIG MONEY. Fascinating work. Write Captain Wagner, 1543 Lexington Avenue, New York.

HELP WANTED—(Continued)

FACTORY WORKERS—$5 TO $10 PREMium with watches, dinner sets, cameras earned easily by ladies or gentlemen; no investment; write today. Dept. 10, Home Supply Co., 119 Siegel St., New York City.

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MEN—BECOME CHAUFFEURS; COMMAND [illegible] Institute, Dept. O 619, Chicago.

$65 A DAY GATHERING EVERGREENS, roots and herbs. 10c brings book and war [illegible] Association, Box 1, New Haven, Conn.

$5 WEEKLY COLLECTING NAMES AND [illegible] Spare time. Send stamp. Superba Co., W52, Baltimore, Md.

WE PAY 15c EACH FOR FARMERS' names. Send dime for contract. Sun, Loreo, Mich.

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WORK FOR UNCLE SAM. HE IS THE best employer. Big pay, sure work, easy hours, long vacations, rapid advance. Thousands of jobs open this year. I will help you get one. Write for free list. Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. Y. 1034 today.

MEN BECOME LOCOMOTIVE FIREMEN, Brakemen, Electric Motormen and Conductors and earn Big Money. Hundreds placed to work $75 and $100 month. No experience necessary. Write Railway Inter-State Association (24), Majestic Bldg., Indianapolis, Ind.

YOU CAN MAKE NECESSARY [illegible] formation how to get Government positions without paying advance fees. Address Progressive Association, 1 College Grove Ave., Chicago.

SILVERING MIRRORS, PLATING TABLEware, [illegible] Home [illegible] Outfits complete. Write for free booklet. [illegible] Co., Dept. 1, Peoria, Ill.

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FARMS WANTED— HAVE 7,000 BUYERS; describe your unsold property. 544 Farmers Exchange, Denver, Colo.

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WANT FEMALE AGENT. SEND twenty cents. Returned if dissatisfied. Kenwood Shops, 4706 Ellis Ave., Chicago.

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BEST OPPORTUNITIES TODAY ARE IN the South for safe investment or homeseekers. Low priced lands, largest profits per acre in grain, alfalfa, fruit, poultry. Healthful home regions; openings for live stock, dairy, poultry, fruit and truck farmers. Write for literature. M. V. Richards, Ind. & Agr. Commr., Room 5 Southern Railway System, Washington, D. C.

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MONTANA FARM LANDS

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PERSONAL—WANTED QUICK—NAME AND [illegible] address of reliable single man [illegible] man who wants lady who could assist him in business. Object matrimony. Address Box [illegible] Chicago, Ill.

A LETTER TO DR. ROWE THE SPECIALIST will tell you all the latest facts on symptoms and cure of varicocele, stricture and urinary disorders. Don't wait—write today. It costs you 2 cents. Send today. Dr. Rowe, 112 N. Pearl St., Buffalo, N. Y.

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GALLOUSES REMOVED ABSOLUTELY. Never fails. Money back guarantees. Send for [illegible] Galloway Remedy Co., W. B. Co., 144 A Northland Ave., Buffalo, N. Y.

LEARN HOW TO CURE YOURSELF WILL make your hair beautifully wavy and curly. Send 10c for a sample. Wavecurl Co., Saint Paul, Minn.

DARE YOU WRITE, A WESTERN FARMER, [illegible] 30, seeking marriage. "Sincere," 57 4th St., San Francisco.

MARRY—Thousands worth $100 to $100,000; Paper sealed 10c. B. W. Love, Box 1616, Denver, Colo.

WILL SELL FARMER'S DAUGHTER, 30, lonely, will marry, address (Lonesome), Box [illegible] Cleveland, Ohio.

YOUR FUTURE TOLD. YEAR'S PREDICtion sealed, only 25c, birthdate. Prof. Speed, Station [illegible] Toledo, Ohio.

GET MARRIED—BEST MATRIMONIAL PAper published. Mailed Free. The Correspondent, Toledo, Ohio.

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GET MARRIED; LARGE, HANDSOMELY [illegible] matrimonial magazine mailed free. H. Jahn, St. Paul, Minn.

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Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1879, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Single subscriptions to the Chicago Ledger by mail $1.00 a year, 50 cents for six months, in advance. Remittances should be made by Bank Draft, Registered Letter, Postoffice or Express Money Order, payable to the Chicago Ledger. The address tab on your paper shows the date to which your subscription is paid.

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5,000,000

READERS WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

Most people act natural when asleep.

Too often bad motives are attached to good acts.

But it is hard to make a good tool of a sharp man.

The hardest work an industrious man can do is nothing.

Money is useful as a servant, but tyrannical as a master.

Lazy men are dead to the world, but they remain unburied.

Often a woman's popularity is due to what she forgets to say.

Sometimes a man avoids a lot of worry by having a poor memory.

An engagement ring on the finger is worth two in the pawnshop.

All things come to those who get tired waiting and go after them.

It's a safe prophesy that he never he encounters a stingy man.

A man isn't necessarily a coward because he's afraid to do wrong.

It's easier to agree with the average man than it is to convince him.

Card playing can't be very wicked, as not one heart in the deck is black.

From a toper's point of view a soft drink is synonymous with hard luck.

A woman can talk without thinking, but she seldom thinks without talking

Age brings us wisdom teeth according to the price we can afford to pay a dentist.

The splinters in the banister of life are unnoticed until we begin to slide down.

Many a man claims to be nervous, when as a matter of fact he is merely ill-tempered.

Vices are among the oldest things on record, yet history doesn't mention the loss of a single one.

They say money talks. Perhaps that is why a doctor examines a patient's tongue the first thing.

It isn't a difficult matter for a man to love his neighbor as himself—that is, if she's young and pretty.

Some people believe in nothing—or, at least in only what they can understand, and it may amount to the same thing.

In a short time after laying aside her wedding gown the average bride begins to wonder how she will look in black.

It is far better to lead a procession than to follow it—unless the leader rides in a black wagon with glass windows.

If a married man leaves plenty of change in his pockets when he goes to bed his wife may not have occasion to ask him for pin money.

Eck Lowrey's Luck

Or, In Quest of Douglas Beechmere

By I. M. Shepler

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CHAPTER XIV.

THE KEY LOG.

WHEN writing home, Eck had told his grandfather of the vague hope he held of finding Scotty to be the old-time friend of Douglas Beechmere, and his grandfather had answered with:

"I hope so, but don't build too high, Eckalo, as yet with us, and getting strong again, but I will not tell him this last. To raise hopes that may never be fulfilled would be bad for the old man in his present state. I incluse a letter to you from Donald McComb. If you stay for any time at those camps, I am coming up to visit you."

Don's letter merely stated: "I am coming up to see you, Eck. Find me a job. I've had a time persuading father and mother to let me go, but since they have had a long talk with your friend father, who told them all about how you were getting along, they have consented to let me go for a while."

Eck smiled to himself. He guessed that grandfather had told them nothing of Bill-Jog-by. In fact, Eck had not told his grandfather of the last episode with Bill. He was very sure that if he did his grandfather would come after him.

He was glad that Don was coming. The work was a little rough for a boy raised as the minister's son had been, but Eck believed it was in him to make good.

Sandy informed him during one of these first days that Eaton was going away.

"Bad cut up the way that girl used him, I guess, and Eeth had over the way he used Scotty," he said.

"What is it that Scotty does that is so important about these woods?" asked Eck.

"It's the eye. There's good timber, and locates lots of it for the mills. There's a precision in his head that can tell him to an inch about how much good lumber a tree contains. That's not all. His judgment is better than Eaton's when it comes to a matter of the machinery, but you can't get Scotty to put himself down to any steady task about the business. And in getting a study raft started, if Scotty can't find that key log that has locked it, then it has to find itself by mere accident."

"Key log?" queried Eck. "What's that?"

"In every raft of logs," explained Sandy, "there's always one key log, and contrary—just like human beings. They don't want to stay as they are placed to stay. They bolt and turn, buck and cavort about like a colt that's had broke. Mebbe these get all right as they move along, all but one, and it sneaks about, then locks up the whole raft, and it comes to a standstill, and can't be started until something turns the key right, or some one finds it and moves it so it turns. Scotty can do that nearly every time. But say, it's dangerous. The raftsmen often get killed at this time. There's a jam on right now, down below the long bend in the river, and Scotty's gone mad to pieces over it. It's the first raft down this spring, and it's important to get it out of the way to let the others down."

Eck had heard of the jam. It was not in his line of work, and he had given it no heed until now.

That afternoon, passing over a secluded road not far from the La Mark home, Eck spied a girl at the side of the road, waiting for some one, he guessed. Ninette La Mark had been pointed out to him, and this was she, he was sure, before he came up to her on his heavily loaded log wagon.

He felt a wave of sympathy for Eaton and a like one for Scotty. She was false to both, and yet how pretty she was, in a dainty, sparkling way.

She stopped Eck, and called up with a winning way in her musical voice: "You are going to the mill? Will you please take this letter to Mr. Eaton?"

Eck shook his head in the negative as he answered:

"I would be sure to get into trouble if I did, Miss La Mark, so I guess I had better not touch it. However, stick it in that crack in that log next you. I'll keep there until I can sign the boss to it."

Ninette hopped up and down like an angry robin at this, but did as he ordered, threatening him with dismissal by Eaton if he let other hands touch it than those for which it was intended.

Eck found Eaton at the mill, and pointed to the letter in the log, slyly watching the gloom on the other's face disappear as he read.

"Brought him some good news, I s'pose," the boy said to himself.

The next day was Saturday, and the loggers got a half-holiday. Eck took this chance to go down and see the jam. He cut across country to its head in the river.

The boss was there, all of the worry back once more in his face. Jam breakers were running here and there over the logs that stretched as far back as Eck could see from river bank to river bank. Here and there waterspouts would ascend with a roar like thunder, the imprisoned water sending up huge logs that fell to crush any life in their way.

Crowds had gathered along the banks at the head of the jam, and Pierre La Mark drove up to one side just as Eck reached it. The small, brown, wrinkled man whisked about like a snappy little dog, asking questions and not standing in one spot long enough at a time to hear any answers given.

Presently Eck heard him say: "Good luck! There comes Scotty! Lan, boy!" to Eck, "and tell Eaton that Scotty is back! Tell him to get him up here this minute. He will find that blasted log holding us back these six days."

Eck went as directed. The boss was standing on the bank, as Scotty said. He received Pierre's order with a shake of his head in the negative, and ordered:

"Go back and tell Pierre La Mark he must order Scotty. I have no authority over that man."

Eck, his heart now bounding fast, gave the word to Pierre, then followed him to where the burly Scotty gloomily watched the river.

"He has plenty of jam breakers, men that know their business," was Scotty's indifferent reply, and Pierre went away with a groan, muttering something too low for Eck to hear.

The boy remained close beside the man he had waited to see, watching for an opportunity to question him, impatient of the crowd circling close to the big, silent fellow.

He was to intent upon studying Scotty that he forgot to watch the logs and the men upon them. Presently he saw a sudden change come into the dark-browed face, and the light eyes seemed to jerk violently, then settle into a long stare at a certain point in the river where water crept up between logs in long, hissing purls. Eck, following the man's gaze, saw Eaton approach this spot and raise the ax to strike at one of the logs over which the water was now pouring with added force.

That instant a hoarse cry from Scotty's throat startled him, the next, the big fellow, with a sound of warning to those on the bank, was speeding over the logs, to catch that ax before it made the second descent, and then Eck saw a strange sight—Scotty pushing the boss ahead of him on the run, while every jam breaker was coming off the raft and on to land with the quickness of a cyclone; and the boy, caught by the running spirit about him, turned, too, and ran for life, followed by roaring water, logs tossed in the air and far out upon the banks like toothpicks.

When he looked again, the raft was going smoothly down the river, and the raftsmen were counting noses to see if all were there safe.

"What is it?" he asked, shaking the water from his coat and gazing at the hefty log fallen just back of him.

"Nothin' much, only the jam. Just broke, a raftsman explained. "The key log turned itself, and Scotty got here just in time to locate it and know it was ready to turn. The boss prodded around like a gilly, at random, must 'a' struck it, and that must 'a' give it a start to unlock itself. Good thing Scotty saw which log it was in time, or the boss and all the other fellers out on them logs would 'a' gone instant to Davy Jones' locker."

As soon as Eck could get the water out of his eyes, for it had been thrown all over him in spite of his running first, he made a bee line in Scotty's direction, but the strange fellow had gone.

"Wouldn't stay to listen to Eaton's

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thanks or turn a word with him. Queer man, Scotty is," a bystander told him.

CHAPTER XV.

ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

THAT night Eck sought Scotty at a little cabin near the mill. Pushing that picture of Douglas Beechmere under his nose he abruptly asked: "Ever see that face in the flesh?"

Adjusting his spectacles, Scotty viewed it in silence a full minute before he answered:

"It might 'a' been Doug Beechmere (then he was that age, again it mightn't 'a' been."

"That's Doug!" exclaimed Eck, his voice choking. "Now in the name of goodness he managed to get the purport of his mission into Scotty's head.

"Doug's father is dead," Scotty replied slowly. "Leastways we were told so. We went up into B. C. and was up there nine months or more, but Doug had written his father how it would be, and not to be alarmed if he did not hear from him for some months, as it was a wild place we were going, and neither us is liked it, and we came back and went straight to the town where Doug's father had lived last time they had heard from him. When we got there he had moved away, and Doug was so homesick to see him he made every inquiry to find out. Doug always said there must 'a' been some letters between them went astray.

"And he was making his way back to the Picketts to know if they were holding any letter for him, he found out the father had died and Doug We set out for that town, and after some inquiries found that his father had died, and the stepmother had gone to parts unknown."

"There was where you got things mixed," interrupted Eck. "It was Doug's father gone to hunt his son."

"Why, there it was in a back-date paper, that notice of his death—Mr. J. B. Beechmere. And they showed us his grave. The undertaker had gone to Oregon. He was a widow and lived with his sister, and when we interviewed her, she remembered that day her brother had been buried, and she was positive it was a Mr. Beechmere. Doug was bad cut up, and couldn't get over it for months. He ordered a headstone taken out to that grave; then we left for Canada. Seemed as if he wanted to get as far from that country as possible to, for what had he there now but his father?

"Well, you two boys did take things for granted on small evidence," half scolded Eck. "Newspapers make mistakes. It was easy to drop the s from 'Mrs.,' and it was easy for the undertaker's sister to forget whom her brother buried on certain days. Anyway, your story shows she did. If Douglas had not been in such a hurry to go off and bury himself in the Canadian wilderness, his father would have found him long ago, or if he had written to the Picketts. Poor old Joshua! Won't he rejoice!

"You forget that Doug, thinking his father dead, had nothing now to write to the Picketts about. And Douglas will rejoice, if he is sorry, for he loved his father, if ever boy did."

And now Eck learned further from Scotty that he and Doug had become blind Douglas. It had been four years since Scotty had a letter from him.

"My fault," said Scotty, "but I got his address yet. I never lose that. Doug is a fixture up there. I didn't like it. Too much solitude for me. Too far to go to find a town."

When Eck finished reading the letter, he quietly observed: "Well, I see that I've got to come to it."

"And I see that it is cut and dried that I move with you," said a voice in the doorway. Joshua had walked in.

"And I see not the slightest use for you boys doing anything of the kind," added Scotty, after his introduction to Don. "You can write and tell them all, and tell him all, or I can do the writing. Good time now for me to answer that last letter. I am sadly ashamed of myself for neglecting old Doug the way I have."

"Oh, we will not neglect the writing, but he may not be there at that place when letters get there. It takes so long for a letter and then for one and for one misses, then there's the delay. I feel that I'm not going to be satisfied until I get there and see him." Eck's tone was impatient.

"Well, I warn you. It'll be no cinch if you go west this way up thru that Saskatchewan country."

"In the meantime we will try it," urged Donald.

The next morning, when Eck came back from posting letters home as well as to Douglas Beechmere, Sandy privately informed him:

"Had to get a head sawyer in my place. The boss has gone with Ninette."

"Gone?" echoed Eck.

"Sure—gone, eloped, and this time no pulling back. The nearer it come time for her to marry Jules Bonnet, the less count, or whatever it is, the further she got away from the notion. I saw him yesterday. He arrived on the train with valet and luggage. He's no spring chicken. Old enough to have been married long ago, but he's rich, and Ninette came down to the boarding-house, and they eloped from there."

"You may not be right, and I think that's just how it ought to be," commented Sandy's listener.

"The day the boys started for [illegible] Ninette went in this narrow [illegible] passed the boss sitting by looking over a week-old paper tossed to one side by somebody. Presently he surprised Don by saying:

"Well, what is it this time?" asked his friend.

"It's Bill Doty again this time. Here in Bill's description, and Bill's picture to a double T. I hope they keep him this time. I will write the sheriff and tell him not to loan Bill any wire."

As Eck had given Don a brief description of his trouble with the preceded to enlighten him as to the latest escapade the young scamp had been up to, this time something in the line of to prove serious and put Bill where he rightly belonged.

"Alone and unaided," Eck explained, "Bill held up a car full of rich tourists in lower Michigan. He has at last achieved his great ambition, and that is smoothly and deliberately went thru the car, divesting every passenger of his or her money and valuables. He was not at the upper end safely with it all, when the conductor butted in on him, and Bill left him badly wounded. The train stopped, a posse formed and took out after him. They ran him across country. The farmers, who knew much of the land, helped him on his way, but not against new recruits every minute or so. They were at close range when Bill made his capture when he came up to an open well with a curb about it. He threw his booty down the well, then ran down a little about the trees to throw them off the track. The farmers, who had come up, [illegible] and [illegible] on the booty, and now I hope he will think of what I told him—that there is a day that who tries to get rich that way. I hope this may be the last time I ever hear his name."

"I don't blame you," answered Don.

"for I'd think by this time Bill would be getting on your nerves."

The boys had money enough to get them easily to Regina, after which they had to make their way by hard work in toward Saskatoon and the northern rise of the Saskatchewan River. Along the Canadian Pacific they came to a construction camp and found their first work.

Each had been given a gun as a present from Scotty, and with it had come diffuse advice. On the way they stopped to help some farmer with fallow plowing, or cut wood for the mills. In all came easy to Eck, but Don crawled to his rough bed sore and fagged, tho never complaining. It was not until they turned westward from Saskatoon that Eck received a letter from his grandmother. He had told him that he would wait for a letter here, and the letter, registered and marked for special delivery, was there for him. It contained money, and Joshua Beechmere had sent it.

"Joshua's feeling was too deep for words. He could only go around dazed and silent," wrote Elder Lowrey. "If he told anything more than 'Bless the boy!' which he would repeat. But he spared no money in telegraphing, and for it seemed long to all of us, it was not a great while before a telegram came back from his son, and then Joshua started, meeting his son at Regina."

"Well, now," muttered Eck, "we can take our time. I like this land. Let's make up our mind to settle here, Don. No use in spending time, hurrying on to get there. Let's mosey along and learn the land by slow travel."

And so they walked and worked, alternately, sleeping overnight with priests and missionaries, interviewed the Mounted Police and Indian Agents, fell in with a Cree Indian named Back Step, who attached himself to them and would not be shaken off, tho Don tried very hard to get rid of him.

"I believe you like Back Step, Eck," Don complained. Back Step told the Crees were the most brutal and ignorant of all the Indian tribes. Back Step believes in the Ma-ta-go, that big Indian devil, and all the little Indian Wa-ta-gos."

"I know all that, but I've sensed it somehow that Back Step knows just where we are heading, and is guiding us straight there without loss of time."

Don "got" Eck's enthusiastic over silver and black foxes. He wondered why in this land where they once belonged in plenty now such furs were scarce, he and Eck could not find enough to start raising them.

"You can't," Back Step told him, and afterward told Don so much about black foxes, red foxes, and all kinds of game, that Eck came quietly to tolerate the big ugly Indian.

One bright morning, after a week's march the [illegible] Back Step came out on bluffs overlooking a wide expanse of rich land, reminding the lads of their home land.

The houses, surrounded by barns, sheds, trees and a stretch of wheat land, with many cattle and sheep grazing below them, were a welcome sight to the lads. Back Step stood contemplating it. Then, pointing with his index finger, he said:

"There your lost man. There my home, too."

Silently they went down the slope and onto the good land, traversed by a smooth road. As they drew near the house a tall, handsome Cree buck himself half out of a door, a big knife in one hand.

"Ominous!" whispered Don to Eck.

"That only Chinee cookee," remarked Back Step.

A large, genial-faced man was coming from a clump of barns to the house.

"That's Douglas Beechmere, I know," Eck said in a low tone.

"And there's Douglas coming to meet him," added Don. "Back Step, you did know the way."

Joshua, catching sight of the boys, hurried to them, both hands outstretched, crying:

"Oh, you young rascals! I thought you had gone too far with your adventuring, and I would never, never see you again. You have kept me in scalding hot tears many a day."

Douglas now advanced, his smile broad and welcoming, his hands extended.

"So you ran across them, Back Step? Good for you. Well I know you did. [illegible] I would not have [illegible] Dogs! Why, this is the young sleuth I believe who ran me down once in the [illegible]

"Douglas Beechmere, I have no use saying one word of thanks, for there aren't enough words coined to thank you with and express what I feel. It is as if my father came straight back from Heaven to me."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE NEW HOME.

LOOKING over the land owned by Douglas Beechmere, the Lugs could not but judge him to be prosperous and of good [illegible] [illegible]

For nearly twenty years half [illegible] boys—he's been working on this land. Entered it and lived here far from white folks. But now he's got them coming. You know England doesn't ship over just any kind of emigrants onto Canada. Oh, no! When they come, it's with money and the promise to make good homes for themselves. It's a good class that comes.

"Doug's in with the Government to improve this country. There are lots of white people now living over there where you see that blue line against the sky. To the west a colony is settling, and Doug is helping them. Soon the railroad will be there, and already they've a big store and a postoffice. Just the spot for a future town.

"Doug's going to help to help you to land. He told me all that not an hour after you lit on your feet here. He says if you're the kind to help, he helps you will slide in easier than he did, for he had to earn and learn it all by his own unbeknowne self. Lots of land here for you."

The next morning after their arrival, Douglas took Don and Eck to the corral and bade each make a choice of a young horse, which was to be his own property.

"Geel" whispered Don, waiting for Eck to get first choice. "You do the work, and I come in on the reward."

"That's all right," Eck answered; "it didn't take any great wit to find what I started to find."

"No, but it took considerable courage in spots, if I'm any judge."

Later, Joshua told the boys how Doug-

Rheumatism

A Home Cure Given by One Who Had It

In the spring of 1892 I was attacked by Muscular and Inflammatory Rheumatism, which settled in my shoulder joints and lasted for three years. I tried remedy after remedy, and doctor after doctor, but got relief [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[

las came to know Back Step, the Cree. His story was as follows:

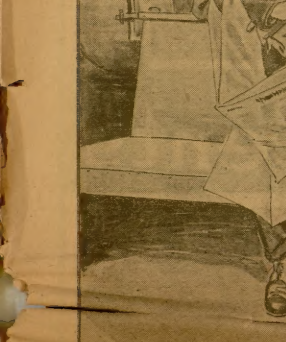
"A band of outlaws was stealing all the provisions and killing or driving off the stock of the settlers living to the north of the Sunny Glade land, as Douglas had named his immediate region. The mounted police were after them, and Douglas, with some of the Canadians he had in time been able to give work to, went out to help the police.

"It was beyond the Basque Hills," continued Joshua, "that they finally drove the outlaws into a corner and captured them, but back in the hills they left Douglas, as they thought, for dead. They could not carry him with them, as they felt sure the wound an outlaw had way while they are out of their mind. They do it by strangling them with a handkerchief knotted about a piece of wood. See?"

Eck and Don both shuddered.

"These Indians must do this secretly, as punishment follows quickly if the Government gets hold of the matter, and they fear the Government. Now, don't think that all the Indians believe these superstitions, but many do, and so do some of the old-time trappers along the Hudson Bay.

"The Indians left it for Back Step to do the strangling, so they helped him with Douglas into some kind of a hole in the hills, where they ordered him to hide the body after his work was done.



He proceeded to read the latest.

given him had instantly proved fatal, but they expected to come back after his body. There was no time to stop now. They had scarcely gone until a band of Indians came on the scene, Back Step with them. These Indians found Douglas living, but muttering in delirium.

"Now a good many of these Indians believe, in spite of the missionaries, that if a person is ever delirious—out of his mind—and comes back to life and sound sense again, he comes back a devil, for, they argue, while he was delirious, a devil spirit had good chance to slip into his body. They put that kind out of the

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Instead, Back Step built a fire, and bound up the wound, and after a while Douglas could speak and knew things. Altho he was nearly dead, Back Step managed to get him to some Indian shacks, and there cared for him until word could be sent to some settlement. After the mounted police got the outlaws in safe custody, they came back looking for the body of Douglas, for they never would have left him alone if they hadn't been sure they could do him no good, that he was dead. So, boys, why shouldn't Doug be good to Back Step, if he is lazy and trifling, and will steal when the chance is given?"

"Hurrah for the Cree!" ejaculated Don.

"Sure, I knew there was something good about Back Step from the first time I saw him," declared Eck.

The boys were shortly in love with this life. Douglas kept plenty of people about him, but there was work for the lads, the he insisted upon their taking more than at present of fishing and hunting, especially when the snows came, and they could go on skis.

To their surprise Douglas gave a great party. From far away there came guests, young and old—Scotch, English, Irish and some native born Canadians who had come to this country to take up land and had brought their families.

There was music for Douglas had some big records in his library, rambling house, and in one of these was placed a piano. There were violins and a harp, and the crowd that came to the entertainment furnished musicians familiar with these instruments. The guests came on horseback, in sleds, on skis—any way to get there.

"Think of coming twenty and thirty miles to a party," said Eck to Don, "and staying a week after they come, feasting, dancing and having a high old good time the whole week."

"And the Chinee cookee, with a half dozen assistants, doing the cooking for those young ladies," responded Donald.

"Wonder why Douglas never brought a woman here as his wife," Eck mused, only half aloud, but Joshua had heard.

"I asked him that. He said that until the last few years, it was too rough and lonely. Men could get out and work, hunt and ride far away in search of company, but a woman—well, it was all different there."

"What's that blessed Cree muttering?" broke in Don. "Look here, Back Step, I don't understand pigeon Cree. Come, now say it in English, Douglas."

By close listening and extra questioning, they got it out of the Cree that somewhere between one branch of the Saskatchewan River and Prince Albert town, a white woman lived with a tribe of Indians. That she was the child of a white trapper and an English woman. That her mother died when she was a babe, and she was cared for by a young squaw. Then her father died, and the trappers made ready to have her sent to England to her mother's people. While preparations were being made, the young squaw disappeared with her pretty white baby. They should not take it from her.

Afterward she appeared in her own tribe, where she married, and had other children, but none she loved so well as the white child. This child was well looked after by missionaries, and under these the white child received a good education, and became a helper in their work with her people.

"Did you ever hear anything that took so many signs, grunts and grunts to make a thing halfway plain?" Joshua asked the boys.

"Just so we get the purport of it all, no matter about the signs and so forth. I take it from them that your son, Mr. Beecher, would like to woo this pretty missionary away from the tribe and bring her down here as his wife, if he could pluck up courage to ask her to come."

It was Don speaking. Back Step grunted and nodded. They had caught on, and it pleased him.

"Back Step, when we go hunting black and silver foxes for our fox farm—you know you are to be partners with us—why can't we round up that way and see that missionary girl, or woman, which is it?"

"Can," was his brief reply. "She woman and girl both. She young yet. And veily pretty. Chinee cookee say it that way." This was as near humor as Back Step could get.

pan-" inside the bottle.

Next week's Ledger will contain the concluding chapters of this interesting story. You will not want to miss it if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly. If you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

Laying a Rug.

Scene: A suburban transient sleeping place for servants, at one time called a home. Persons in the tragedy:. A man and his wife. Property: A new rug, just delivered from the shop.

Wife—"How do you think it ought to go?"

Husband (grabbing it and throwing on the floor)—"This way, of course."

Wife (lifting up one end and pulling it around)—"No, that's better. Still, that isn't quite right. Now it's completely around. No! Not that way; the other way."

Husband—"Huh! That's no good."

Wife—"Well, try it."

(Husband leans over and moves rug where indicates. Wife surveys it critically.)

Wife—"A little more that way. That's too much. Push it back to you. That's too much. Push it back. Now pull it—just a little."

Husband (puffing)—"What do you think I am—the piston rod of a steam engine?"

Wife (absorbed)—"That's not quite right. Take it up and put it down the other way."

Husband—"Look here! Have we got to do this thing now? I'm tired."

Wife—"Yes! Yes! Try that way. No! The other way."

Husband—"Say! You don't know anything about this rug! (He grabs it furiously, mad with rage, lifts it with superhuman strength into the place where he threw it first.) There! That's the proper place for the rug! You never did have any judgment or taste about rugs anyway."

Wife—"No! No! That isn't right. Just move it—"

Husband—"Never! I——"

Wife (sweetly)—"Just once more, darling! That's a good fellow—one inch more that way. There! That's just right."

(Husband, immensely relieved, starts to go.)

Wife—"Oh, darling, wait a minute."

Husband—"Well, what do you want now?"

Wife—"Won't you please take this rug up to the top floor? It isn't a ball rug, you know. I just wanted to see how it would look here."—Life.

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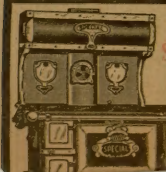

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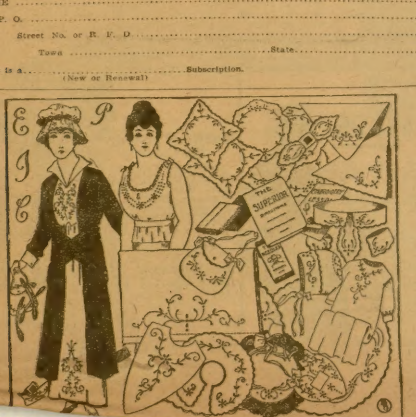

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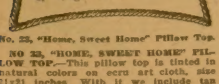

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Her Strange Confession.

(Continued From Page 8.)

I marry. I can't keep up in the clouds all the time."

"I can't understand," Grace said, shaking her head. "I thought all of you were in love with her."

"Not yet," and Young laughed in a heart-free manner.

"But, Frank, you mustn't even joke about Mr. Kurston not loving her. He adores her."

"I can't doubt that after that look we saw, but still I just bet the money comes mighty handy."

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9167 Girl's Dress, 2, 4 and 6 years.

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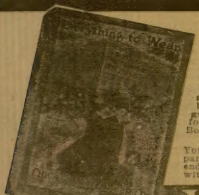

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Sizes: Waistband 22 to 30 in.; skirt length 36 to 40 in. Colors: Black or navy blue, all wool serge. Price, $2.19 delivered free, only.....

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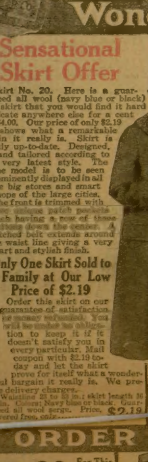

Men's Fine Melton Overcoat

Overcoat No. 21. Wonderful bargain in this fine Melton Coat with Astrakan Collar and Quilted Sateen Lining. The material alone would be a good bargain at $6.00 but when you get more than double value for your money Overcoat is absolutely the latest model—

Created by Best Designers In America

Cloth is good quality, heavy weight blank. Made of best black Astrakan cloth. Made with 2-button peak lapels, 1 inside pocket. Lined throughout with quilted sateen. Embodies all features which protect you against cold weather. Length of coat 52 in. Sizes 34 to 42 in. chest measure. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Price, delivered..... $6.98

Men's Blue Serge Suit Only $8.95

Suit No. 22. You couldn't buy a blue serge suit of this quality and style for less than $10 anywhere else. Our price, only $8.95. Think of it—only $8.95 for a pure wool, navy blue serge suit, designed and tailored after the very latest style. Cost is the newest three-button, single breasted style with neatly shaped lapels, two flap pockets and two ticket pockets. Coat has three roll buttons. Vest is cut low and has 5 buttons. Trousers are the very fashionable shape, has belt loops and customary side and hip pockets.

This Pure Wool Blue Serge Guaranteed NOT To Fade

We stand right behind this swell tailored suit without $10,000 guarantee which protects you in every way. Send us your order today. Your money back if you're not more than pleased. Sizes 34 to 44 in. chest measure. Send for only..... $8.95

Special Reduction On This Fine Wool Velour Coat

Coat $6.95

With New Two-Way Fur Collar

Coat No. 23. You'll never again have such a chance to get a fine velour coat like this for only $6.95. Don't delay. You can order right from this page without waiting for our catalog. We guarantee to satisfy you or refund your money.

This is a charming and graceful model.

Made In Brown or Green Velour, 32 to 46 Bust Measure, Only $6.95

It cut on very straight lines, flaring very full at the bottom. Pelerine fold in at the waistline by a wide belt of self-material—collar is trimmed with ermine. 3 large patch pockets; stylish collar of beautiful genuine Mouflon fur; new two-way collar which may be worn as shown in illustration or buttoned up close to the neck. This is an exceedingly stylish and unusually warm garment. Lined throughout with fine quality satin. Sizes 32 to 46 in. bust measure. Colors, brown or green. Price, delivered free, only..... $6.95

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Fox Fur Scarf

Fur Scarf No. 24. When you see this beautiful white Iceland fox scarf in length and thickness and beauty of fur you will be surprised to learn that we offer it at such a low price. Scarf is made of selected skins, full and fluffy for warmth and comfort. Lined throughout with heavy satin. Trimmed with head, tail and paws. Every scarf guaranteed to be worth many times the money. Try it if you like. Compare it with any fur scarf you can buy elsewhere.

44 Inches Long, Full Animal Fashion—Head, Tail and Tabs

Scarf closes by snapping the mouth over the tail. This positively the biggest, handsomest scarf ever offered at such an amazing bargain price. Send for it today. We positively guarantee your complete satisfaction. If you're not, if you do not say it's the biggest fur scarf bargain you ever saw, return it at our expense and we will refund your money without a word of argument. Delivered, all charges prepaid for only..... $2.89

$2.49 Boys' Suit

Boy's Suit No. 25. Wool and mixed cassimere, in neat plaid and checked patterns and colored stripes. Coat is double breasted, with 2 rows of buttons. Vest is cut low and has 5 buttons. Trousers have suspender buttons and are cut full and roomy. Sizes 7 to 16 years. Price, delivered free, only..... $2.49

Special Lot Boys' Knickerbockers 50c

Boy's Pants No. 26. Would cost 75c or $1 at most stores. Good quality cassimere in brown or gray mixed. Trousers are cut full and roomy, have belt loops and two side pockets, both strong, well stitched. Sizes 7 to 16. Price, delivered free..... 50c

Don't Miss This Boy's Waists 19c

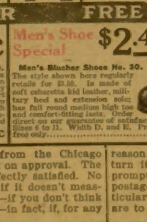
Boy's Waist No. 26. An extra fine value. Good strong material—percale, chambray, etc., in plain colors, also in fancy stripes and figures. Some have collar attached, others have separate collars. Sizes 12 to 14 years. Price, delivered free..... 19c

SPECIAL Silk Crepe De Chine Embroidered Waist Only $1.79

Waist No. 27. Order this SPECIAL. When you see the waist, if you don't think it an extraordinary value, send it back and your money will be refunded. Waist is made of fine quality silk crepe de chine, in the new shade of Copenhagen blue. Has new square yoke, front and back, trimmed with fine Irish lace and hemstitching. Collar, cuffs and front are prettily embroidered in white, black and colors. Sizes 32 to 44 bust measure. Price, delivered free, or charges prepaid..... $1.79

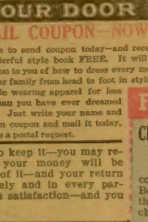
WE DELIVER 2 Men's Shirts 74c

Blue Chambray Shirt No. 29. Sensational bargain. 2 extra heavy shirts for only 74 cents, on guarantee of satisfaction or money refunded. Don't Miss This. Shirt is of extra good quality—indigo dyed chambray. Has one patch pocket, attached soft collar, extension neck band, yoke. All seams are felled and lapped; gusseted. Sizes 14½ to 17. Color, blue. Price delivered free. Two shirts only..... 74c



Men's Shoe Special $2.48

Men's Blucher Shoes No. 30. The style shown here regularly retails for $3.50. Is made of soft cabretta kid leather, military heel and extension sole; has full round toe, medium high toe and comfort-fitting last. Order direct on our guarantee of satisfaction or money refunded. Sizes 6 to 11. Width D. and E. Price delivered free only..... $2.48



Amazing Bargain In Ladies' Shoes $1.98

Ladies' Shoes No. 31. Only one pair to a family at this special bargain price. Shoes is of fine selected patent leather in gaitor effect; dull soft leather top. Stylish, dressy shoes. Unequaled for wear; a most popular style. Sold in stores for $3.00 or $3.50. Order on guarantee of satisfaction or money refunded. Sizes 2½ to 8; width C, D and E. State size and width wanted. Price, delivered, all charges prepaid only..... $1.98

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